

Ansari extradited from Norway

OSLO (AFP) — Palestinian Soraya Ansari, wanted by Germany in connection with the October 1977 hijacking of a Lufthansa airliner, has been extradited from Norway to Germany, the Norwegian news agency NTB said Saturday. NTB said a plane carrying Mr. Ansari, 41, took off from Oslo's Fornebu airport at 1315 GMT headed for Hamburg. Oslo police would not confirm the report, but had previously said that Ms. Ansari would be extradited sometime Saturday. A police press conference is scheduled for later Saturday. Norwegian press reports have indicated that court proceedings against Ms. Ansari will begin Sunday in Hamburg. Ms. Ansari is the sole survivor of four Palestinians who hijacked the Lufthansa plane on a flight from Palma de Mallorca in Spain to Frankfurt in a bid to free 11 leaders of the German Red Army Faction and two members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. The German pilot was shot dead on board the aircraft and his body thrown down onto the tarmac at Mogadishu, capital of Somalia.

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JD1.8b draft budget unveiled Jardaneh announces deficit-free projections Current expenditure up by 7.5% and capital expense by 21% in budget described as meeting requirements of era

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Finance Minister Basal Jardaneh on Saturday unveiled a JD 1.798 billion draft budget for fiscal 1996, reflecting an 11 per cent increase over 1995 and a 21 per cent rise in capital expenditure.

The actual deficit in the budget was estimated at JD 163 million, but the gap will be plugged by grants and assistance, thereby making the budget practically deficit free, Mr. Jardaneh told reporters.

"General revenues will cover the full general expenditures, and when we take into consideration interest on military loans the actual deficit (before grants and assistance) conforms with the economic reform programme" being implemented in coordination with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), Mr. Jardaneh said.

He noted that the deficit was 3.8 per cent of the estimated gross domestic product of JD 5,093 million and, as such, well within the ceilings of the economic reform programme.

Princess Alia visits quake-hit Aqaba

AQABA (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Alia on Saturday toured several areas of Aqaba to inspect the conditions of citizens in the city, which was hit by earthquake last Wednesday. Princess Alia stressed to the citizens the keenness of the government to offer every possible assistance to areas hit by natural disasters.

Prime Minister receives U.S. admiral

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker on Saturday received Admiral Arthur Owens, vice chairman of the American Joint Chiefs of Staff, who arrived in Amman earlier in the day on a two-day official visit. Sharif Zeid and Adm. Owens discussed Jordanian-U.S. cooperation in military fields and issues of common interest. The meeting was attended by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Lieutenant-General Abdul Hafez Mar'at Al Kaabneh and American Ambassador to Jordan Wesley Egan.

Hammad leaves for Bahrain

AMMAN (Petra) — Interior Minister Salameh Hammad Saturday left for Manama on a three-day official visit to Bahrain at an invitation by his Bahraini counterpart, Sheikh Mohammad Bin Khalifah Al Khalifah. Mr. Hammad will hold talks with Bahraini officials on means of enhancing bilateral relations in security-related fields.

Terrorism to be on Barcelona agenda

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa said Saturday that "terrorism" will be at the centre of discussions at the conference for Euro-Mediterranean cooperation in Barcelona. "Terrorism, an international phenomenon, not just Arab, is among the subjects to be debated at Barcelona," Mr. Musa told reporters. "All international and regional organisations are hostile to terrorism because it is a grave matter which threatens the peace and security of many parts of the world," Mr. Musa said. After the bombing of its embassy in Pakistan, which left 17 dead and over 60 injured, Egypt called for the strengthening of international cooperation against terrorism (see page two and 12).

The draft budget was presented to the Council of Ministers during its regular session on Saturday, and the Cabinet is expected to discuss it and forward it to Parliament this week so that the legislature, which begins its regular session on Dec. 2, could debate, incorporate amendments as it sees fit and approve it before Dec. 31.

Unveiling the highlights of the budget at a press conference, Mr. Jardaneh also confirmed that civil servants and security personnel, including police and armed forces, would get an across the board monthly salary increase of JD 10 each with effect from May 1, 1996.

The 1996 draft budget envisages total revenues at JD 1,798 million. The projection reflects an increase of JD 128 million, or 7.5 per cent, over the reassessed figure of JD 1,672.7 million for fiscal 1995.

The revenues were split as: JD 1,575 in local revenues, JD 163 million in grants and assistance and JD 60 million in repaid loans. These compare with the reassessed 1995 figures of JD 1,440 million, JD 173.7 million and JD 59

million respectively.

The figures highlighted a better-than-expected performance of the budget in 1995, particularly that local revenues were originally estimated at JD 1,400 million and grants and assistance at JD 165 million.

Current expenditures are estimated at JD 1,328.4 million, compared with JD 1,225.2 million in 1995 — an increase of JD 103.2 million, or 8.4 per cent.

Capital expenditures are projected at JD 469.6 million

compared with JD 387.9 million in 1995 — an increase of JD 81.7 million, or 21.1 per cent.

The increase in capital expenditures over 1995, Mr. Jardaneh explained, represents the government's commitment to invest in infrastructure and also to "upgrade the quality of investments" with a view of attracting private sector capital.

The finance minister did not provide a detailed breakdown of the budget figures and Finance Ministry officials said they would release the detailed version of the draft budget on Sunday.

In general, Mr. Jardaneh said the draft budget was drawn on the basis of the following:

— Keeping the deficit well within the ceilings of the economic reform programme;



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— Keeping the deficit well within the ceilings of the economic reform programme;

— Increasing self-reliance through controlling government spending and improving local revenues to cover current and capital expenditures;

— Encouraging national savings through reducing consumption and channel

(Continued from page 7)

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, the chief chamberlain, was Saturday sworn in as Regent at a ceremony held at the Prime Ministry and attended by Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem.

The Regent then held a meeting with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and later chaired part of the regular Cabinet meeting during which the Kingdom's 1996 fiscal budget was reviewed (see separate story).

The Council of Ministers listened to a report by Sharif Zeid about his inspection visit to damaged installations in Aqaba following last Wednesday's earthquake.

Sharif Zeid reassured the Cabinet that the competent authorities, particularly the Civil Defence Department (CDD) and the Ministry of Education, were conducting an awareness campaign on precautionary measures to be taken in emergencies.

The prime minister said that there was need for the Ministry of Interior, the CDD and other concerned authorities to ensure that the Jordanian national building code was being applied in all buildings. Multi-storey buildings like hotels should have extra exits and fire escapes to ensure safety of residents, he said.

The Cabinet also listened to a report by Minister of

Awqaf and Islamic Affairs Abdul Salam Abbadi about a recent visit he paid to Saudi Arabia where he discussed arrangements for Jordanians performing the Hajj pilgrimage.

The Cabinet endorsed an agreement on cooperation in cultural and sports affairs with China and listened to a report by the minister of

youth on a recent trip to China.

The Council of Ministers approved of a decision by the Jordan Agricultural Marketing and Processing Company to raise the price of tomatoes it buys from local farmers at the rate of JD 10 per tonne and the Ministry of Supply's decision to float the company's prices to enable it to

make an appropriate profit.

The Cabinet also decided to reduce the price of water sold to the company this year to 300 fils from 600 fils per cubic metre.

Following the Cabinet session the Regent visited the Civil Defence Department where he was briefed on plans applied in emergency cases and in natural disasters.

AMMAN (Petra) — The European Union (EU)-organised Barcelona conference, which opens Monday, will define the general framework of relationship between European and non-European nations around the Mediterranean Sea and the partnership which European countries plan to establish with other nations in the region, Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti said Saturday.

Mr. Kabariti, who leaves for the conference Sunday leading a Jordanian delegation, said the conference would focus attention on the future relationship between these nations in politics, security, finance as well as social and cultural fields.

The Barcelona conference represents the starting point for the negotiations between the EU and non-EU Mediterranean countries on partnership agreements. It is also a direct product of the Middle East peace process,

Prince Ra'd sworn in as Regent; Sharif Zeid reports on quake damages at Aqaba



His Royal Highness Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, the Regent, on Saturday holds talks with Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker at the Prime Ministry in a meeting attended by Royal Court Chief Marwan Al Qasem (Petra photo)



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which started in Madrid in 1990, said the minister.

Jordan's negotiations with the EU, started in July, and the two sides held two rounds of talks in Brussels and another session will be held next month, Mr. Kabariti said.

Mr. Kabariti said that Arab countries had been holding meetings with the EU on a Barcelona declaration.

Jordan, he said, will play a key role in the meeting, focusing attention mainly on economic and financial issues especially as the expected partnership agreements with Europe will provide for a \$6 billion in European financial assistance to the Middle Eastern countries over the coming years in addition to loans from the European Investment Bank to finance development projects. He said that the conference was also expected to create a free trade zone between the European and non-European na-

tions in the Mediterranean zone.

Mr. Kabariti is accompanied to the meeting by the secretaries of planning and industry and trade as well as representatives of the Ministry of Finance, the Central Bank of Jordan, the Foreign Ministry, the Jordanian Armed Forces and Jordan's ambassador to Spain.

In addition to Jordan, the Arab countries represented at the Barcelona conference are Egypt, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine, Algeria, Morocco, Turkey, Malta, Israel and Cyprus and the 15 EU nations will also take part.

Following the official Barcelona meeting Jordan will participate in meetings of non-governmental and private organisations in the Spanish city with a delegation led by Bassam Al Saket, chairman of the Jordan Cement Factories Company.

PLO, Hamas trade charges

GAZA (R) — The Hamas movement on Saturday accused the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) of jeopardising reconciliation efforts between the two sides by arresting the group's activists in Palestinian-ruled Gaza.

Hamas said in a statement that "some groups in the (Palestinian National) Authority (PNA) insist on losing this historical chance (to reconcile) out of a desire to continue the atmosphere of escalating tensions."

It said the PNA was pursuing "a campaign of repression and terrorism against the Islamic movement through arrests and torture in the authority's prisons and cells" which could lead to a breakdown of the talks between the two sides.

PLO leader Yasser Arafat, hoping to turn Hamas' violent opposition to his 1993 peace deal with Israel into political channels, has been holding reconciliation talks with the group.

A PLO security official, who preferred to remain anonymous, accused Hamas of trying to foil reconciliation efforts by placing unacceptable preconditions including demanding the release of jailed Hamas leader Sayed Abu Musameh.

Hamas also condemned last week's arrest of Ahmad Nimer, a hardliner in the movement, and called for his release.

In reaction the PLO official said Mr. Nimer was arrested after he was warned several times to refrain from inciting the public against the PNA.

"But Nimer went overboard last week when he called during Friday prayers not only for halting the PLO-Hamas dialogue but also called for the killing of authority officials in the same way that (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Rabin was killed for making concessions on land."

The reconciliation initiative follows a Palestinian police crackdown on Hamas after the group claimed responsibility for several

tension of his six-year term.

Parliament last month extended Mr. Hrawi's term, which was due to end on Friday, for three years without fresh elections, despite Christian protests that this threatened democracy.

Many Lebanese Christians, who despite Syria's post-war hegemony over their country, had opposed the extension arguing that there were no exceptional domestic circumstances to justify not holding presidential elections.

Without the amendment, parliament would have had to elect a new president before Mr. Hrawi's term expired, with the incumbent barred from reelection.

The Maronite Christian president said in the interview broadcast by state-run and private television stations that he would work to further heal the scars of civil war by returning home war refugees and improving social conditions.

(Continued from page 7)

'Barcelona meeting will define ties with EU, partnership deal'

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Bosnian Serb hardliners fan revolt against peace accord

SARAJEVO (Agencies) — Hardline Bosnian Serb leaders struggling to cling to power fanned a revolt against the loss of Serb sectors of Sarajevo on Saturday and demanded changes to the peace plan for Bosnia.

Serb youths in the Vugosa suburb of the Bosnian capital, which is due to return to government control, demonstrated against the plan and Serb officials said more would follow.

The protest followed attacks by the Bosnian Serb "president," Radovan Karadzic and the "parliament speaker," Momcilo Krajisnik on the peace treaty negotiated in the United States this week.

"We never agreed to give up Sarajevo," Mr. Karadzic said on television. "We believe that negotiations can continue."

Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic brokered the terms of the treaty on behalf of the Bosnian Serbs and forced Mr. Karadzic to sign them in Belgrade on Thursday.

The hardliners returned to their government seat at Pale outside Sarajevo to accuse Mr. Milosevic of sacrificing Bosnian Serb interests in order to win the easing of

sanctions against Serbia.

They demanded a renegotiation of the deal before it is formally signed in Paris at the start of December in preparation for the deployment of NATO peacekeeping troops.

Mr. Karadzic indicated he and his army commander General Ratko Mladic would try to defy a clause in the peace agreement which strips them of power as accused war criminals.

He said they could even attend the signing ceremony in Paris although they would risk arrest and trial before the U.N. war crimes tribunal in the Hague.

"The signature on such a document on behalf of the Bosnian Serb republic is put by the president of the republic," Mr. Karadzic said.

Mr. Krajisnik and Mr. Karadzic attacked Mr. Milosevic for failing to secure the return of around 4,000 square kilometres of north-west Bosnia which the Bosnian Serb army lost to government and Croat fighting during the autumn.

Belgrade newspapers dismissed the opposition from the Bosnian Serbs as bluster from "yesterday's men who are on their way out."

Hundreds of Croats meanwhile protested in the

coastal city of Dubrovnik against ceding part of the far southeastern Croatian coastline to the Bosnian Serbs in the wake of the Dayton peace plan.

Demonstrators held up banners and placards proclaiming: "Prevlaka is Croatia," and "We will not hand over Prevlaka," referring to a peninsula southeast of Dubrovnik, in the first sign of Croatian public anger at the peace deal.

The protest was called by seven opposition parties who said handing over the Prevlaka peninsula to Pale — thereby giving Bosnian Serbs their long-sought access to the sea — was the thin end of the wedge and would open the way for negotiation on ceding other pieces of Croatian territory.

The United States was counting on Mr. Milosevic to make sure Bosnian Serbs abide by the peace pact, White House spokeswoman said.

In Sarajevo, a Serb neighbourhood official quoted Gen. Mladic as saying his army "will not abandon Sarajevo."

"We expect the Bosnian Serbs to fully live up to the commitment they've made,

(Continued from page 7)

12:59	London, Beirut (BA)	Dep. Amman	8:00 a.m. every Monday
01:20	Amsterdam (KL)	Arr. Damascus	5:00 p.m. every Monday
DEPARTURES		Dep. Damascus	7:30 a.m. every Sunday
		Arr. Amman	5:00 p.m. every Sunday
Royal Jordanian (RJ)			
Flights			
(Terminal 1)			
05:30	Aqaba (RJ)	Appic	700/50
06:15	Beirut (RJ)	Banana	680
08:50	Frankfurt (RJ)	Banana (Mukammarr)	620
11:25	Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)	Cabbage	120/81
11:30	Vienna, Rome (RJ)	Carrot	240/180
11:30	Amsterdam, New York (RJ)	Cauliflowr	180/120
12:15	Athens (RJ)	Cucumbers (large)	170/120
20:00		Cucumbers (small)	370/300
New Delhi, Kuala Lumpur (add)		Eggplant	160/100
20:20	Ahu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)	Garlic	650/220
20:25	New Delhi (RJ)	Grapes	650/500
20:45	Jeddah (RJ)	Grape Fruit	200/150
21:00	Damascus (RJ)	Letow	250/180
21:00	Cairo (RJ)	Marrow (large)	700/50
22:05	Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)	Marrow (small)	200/120
22:40	Bangkok (RJ)	Olives (green)	700/500
22:45	Sana'a (RJ)	Onion (green)	240/200
Other flights (Terminal 2)		Onion (dry)	230/150
07:45	Beirut (ME)	Orange	450/250
11:30	Sana'a (YJ)	Pepper (hot)	160/100
13:30	Doha (GF)	Pepper (sweet)	180/120
15:00	Doha (OF)	Potato	270/180
16:05	Muscow (SU)	Radiash	130/90
16:15	Cairo (MS)	Spinach	180/120
02:30	Amsterdam (KL)	String Beans	700/500
		Tangerine	250/180

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King to open Parliament's 3rd ordinary session Dec. 2

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein will open Parliament's third ordinary session on Dec. 2 with a speech from the throne. The traditional speech is expected to outline the government's policies both externally and internally.

A Royal Decree issued last Wednesday summoned Parliament for the meeting. The session will focus on laws regarding parliamentary elections and labour.

Following the opening session the Senate will convene under the chairmanship of its speaker, Ahmad Lawzi. A Royal Decree announcing the summoning of Parliament for the session and another decree issued Nov. 23 reappointing Mr. Lawzi as Speaker of the House will be read out.

During the first session the Senate will elect a committee to prepare the reply to the speech from the throne and it will also elect members of the senate's permanent bureau, two deputies and two assistants to the speaker as well as the senate's financial, administrative, legal and foreign affairs committees.

The Lower House of Parliament will then hold its first session under the chairmanship of the oldest-

serving member, during which a Royal Decree calling the House for a meeting will be read out.

In the previous ordinary session the House elected committees for public freedoms and citizens' rights, agriculture and irrigation, health and the environment, education, Palestine and the occupied Arab lands, rural and badia regions, energy and water affairs.

Parliament went into recess on Sept. 19 after a three-month special summer session in which the legislature changed a number of laws to reflect the 1994 peace treaty with Israel.

Jordan to change to ozone-friendly substances in production processes

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Ministry of Municipal and Rural Affairs Saturday signed an agreement with local industrial firms producing plastic and sponge products that guarantees the substitution of production materials harmful to the ozone layer with ozone-friendly substances.

Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Nader Thuheirat, who signed the agreement, told the Jordan Times that the group of concerned local companies will together receive a total of \$200,000 in order to convert to using the less damaging substances. Financial assistance will be extended from the Montreal Fund.

The fund was established in 1987 to help countries carry out necessary changes in production processes. According to the Montreal Protocol of 1987, certain chemicals, which include chloro-fluorocarbons (CFCs), create holes in the ozone layer of gas which protects the earth from dangerous levels of ultraviolet rays.

Under the same protocol wealthy nations have agreed to allocate \$510 million to a special fund to help countries reduce their dependence on ozone-

destructive materials. The agreement, which was signed Saturday, will be forwarded by the ministry to the Montreal Fund in order to secure the \$200,000 for the Jordanian plastic and sponge factories, to enable the factory to comply with the Montreal Protocol's regulations, the minister said.

"On Dec. 7, I will sign an agreement in Vienna which will guarantee another \$2.5 million towards helping Jordanian industrial firms get rid of the ozone-destructive materials and acquire harmless substances for their production purposes," Mr. Thuheirat said.

Jordan, a signatory of the Montreal Agreement, is entitled to receiving financial aid to carry out the protocol's recommendations and provisions. Jordan has so far received \$2.5 million for the purpose of conversion, Mr. Thuheirat added.

CFCs are widely used as industrial solvents and in making foam and aerosol sprays. According to the protocol 85 per cent of ozone-destructive substances will have been substituted by 1997 and total elimination is expected by the year 2000.



Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Nader Thuheirat Saturday signs an agreement with local industrial firms to substitute ozone-destructive substances in production means with ozone-friendly ones (Petra photo)

Seminar on labour issues opens with emphasis on safe working conditions

AMMAN (Petra) — The International Labour Organisation (ILO) Saturday opened a six-day seminar on labour management in the Arab World in cooperation with the Labour Ministry and the Amman Chamber of Industry.

Topics for discussion range from Jordanian labour legislations, ILO terms and regulations pertaining to workers, the duty of labour inspectors, improvement of working conditions of working women and youth as well as workers' occupational safety measures.

Addressing the opening session Labour Minister Nader Abul Sha'er said labour inspection constitutes one of the basic requirements for helping Jordan control and organise its labour market and deal with developments pertaining to occupational safety and workers' health and employment.

The Jordanian labour law of 1960 and the subsequent amendments to it include provisions which regulate the safe and sound relations between workers and employers. The 1963 amendment to that law provides for continued inspection at various industries to ensure sound applications of the law and guarantee the interest of all parties, said the minister.

Sadeq Belhaj, ILO regional representative, told the session that the ILO has given due attention to the question of labour inspection and said the 1995 amendment to the rules contains ample provisions for labour inspection.

Japanese to lend expertise in safer disposal

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs Nader Thuheirat Saturday also received a visiting Japanese technical team currently on a visit to Jordan to help the Kingdom's municipalities safely and non-hazardously dispose of waste.

The minister thanked the team from the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for its help in the course of the country's drive to protect the environment.

Philosophers to discuss the new, the old and the pertinent

AMMAN (Petra) — The Arab Philosophical Society (APS) Saturday opened a three-day meeting at the University of Jordan attended by delegates from eight Arab states as well as South Africa and the Russian Federation.

Delegates are expected to review working papers dealing with Arab philosophy, schools of western philosophy and issues pertinent to the subject that are significant to Arab culture and Islam.

University President Fawzi Gharaibeh opened the meeting by welcoming delegates and underlining the need for the exchange of ideas within the context of democracy, respect of human rights and protection of personal and public freedoms.

APS President Ahmad Madi addressed the opening session by outlining the society's activities and contributions towards promoting inter-Arab cultural cooperation.

The head of Jordan University's philosophy department, Dr. Salman Bedour, also addressed meeting in which he said philosophy should contribute to society in practical ways in order to better confront the requirements of the modern age.

WHAT'S GOING ON

FILM

* "Fresa y Chocolate" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabal Amman, at 6.30 p.m.

* "White Hunter, Black Heart" at the American Centre at 5.00 p.m.

LECTURE

* "Love in Poetry from Al-Andalus to Europe" (in Arabic) by Dr. Abdul

Wahed Lu'lu'ah at Abdel Hameed Shoman Foundation, Jabal Amman, at 6.00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Annual fall exhibition "Khawater" at the Jordan River Designs, (Tel. 613081/2) until Dec. 1.

tions Graphiques 93-95" at the French Cultural Centre.

* "Sculptures & paintings by Iraqi Artist Ismail Fattah, and a retrospective exhibition of sculptures & drawings by Mona Saudi at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh.

Paintings complete whole through a trilogy of inspiration

By Ica Wabbbeh
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A nice statement at the end of autumn for art lovers in Jordan is made by the joint exhibition of Lucy Marto, Janine Saaf and Tete Wegelius currently showing at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Tete Wegelius' oils mostly depict still life in rich pastel nuances. Pottery, in natural clay colours or more elegantly, glazed modern pieces, with light reflecting off their shiny surfaces, is set against rich drapes of heavy material mostly contrasting with, but thoroughly complementing, the whole.

Basket and vases sometimes replace the pottery, holding delicate stems of flowers or fruit. A profusion of flowers of all colours and beautifully displayed, or fruit — apples, pomegranates, quinces or citrus — often complete the whole, adding to the feeling of abundance and highlighting the background, discretely stealing the "show," drawing the eye away from everything else.

Nature, from the Kingdom, as it is easy to recognize, is present in the shape of old oak trees with thick, gnarled trunks belling rich foliage and hills profiled on the horizon while white boulders form the fore-

ground. A valley in spring is particularly enticing, with purple, lilac and blue flowers strewn in a mass of green and yellow. A stream of blue water barely shows on a bend, but enough to prove it is the source of life and the "creator" of all the colours around it.

Human presence is not forgotten. It comes in the form of portraits, mostly of men wearing traditional head-dresses or modern women gazing into the future or perhaps the unknown; it also comes under the form of Greek or Roman statue heads, apparently part of the ruins Jordan is so famous for.

Marking a smooth passage to Janine Saaf's paintings, new statuary heads, this time of women though, singularly and conspicuously take the pride of place.

On a pale ochre-yellow background, the brown-brick outline of the statues' heads and a headless figure clad in a toga illuminates the frames, giving them a fiery quality, somehow bringing to mind Nero's Rome aflame.

Some amorphous figures hinting at busts, as if marking a phase in a sculptor's creation, are the themes of another canvas, overshadowed by a female head surrounded by flowers and leaves, like a goddess of



Works by Lucy Marto, above, Tete Wegelius, top right, and Janine Saaf



bounty or a symbol of autumn richness. A group of delicate transparent greenish flasks and a bowl is gingerly placed on some newspaper or magazine paper with the same delicate pale green writing on it and with see-through

cloth on the background; it is calming and peaceful to look at, homely yet exotic, suggestive of a jinni lamp but having nothing to do with it. Big sunflowers in a glass vase and hibiscuses over a white wall are so realistic-

and blues, the images are teeming with Mother Earth's creations and man's diligent hands' works. Nature in most paintings is drawn with equally bold strong colours: dark greenish blue, foamy water meanders among dark reddish-brown boulders, green autumn leaves of twin trees allow an opening to peer through at a construction behind: bleached houses are either lonely among olive groves or clustered in a valley surrounded by barren rock; trees, twisted by the wind, cling to the soil symbolising life's victory over the desert.

Exception make to two pastel landscapes, one of a peaceful village lit by a lazy afternoon sun, the other of a body of water somnolent in its rocky bed.

Two big flowers created in an almost abstract way seem to ease the way towards Lucy Marto's stylised abstracts whose colours, if not theme, complement the whole.

Delicately shaped abstract forms in turquoises, blues, yellows, oranges, aniles and mustard greens intertwine with, come in the foreground or form the background of disciplined letters in Arabic calligraphy.

Fragments of mosaics or floral themes remind of Madaba or Jerash, but the entirety is more like rich gaudy reds, greens, oranges

and blues. At times the letters flow into words and sentences, at others they bead and drift, meeting to form arabesques or surround hinted-at pottery coloured in green, yellow and Chinese red.

Ogival frames, lancets or geometrical figures come to contradict the abstract whole, transposing one to the world of Andalusia and the time of creative art works.

Two landscapes — a hazy bluish-grey mountain top and a yellow pink camp with small bushes here and there and a stairway shaded by luxuriant vegetation and decorated with pottery — make the transition to still life, completing the thematic circle of the whole exhibition, blending in easily with the rest.

Flowers in a crystal vase and fruit in clay pots or baskets are projected against a background of tissue richly falling and draping to form the background.

Glasses in rich green or wooden spoons in a pot come in twos and attract the eye with their contrasting colours and pure, clear lines.

The beautifully framed oils and water colours show artistic dedication and love for nature.

They will be on display until Dec. 5, a glowing, heart-warming sight for cold winter days.

'Yes' seen slim winner in Irish divorce poll

DUBLIN (R) — Ireland appeared to have voted by a majority of one per cent Saturday to scrap a ban on divorce after a bruising battle between the Roman Catholic Church and the state, early results showed.

With a handful of constituency votes counted, computer projections said the final result would be 50.06 per cent in favour of legalising divorce and 49.04 per cent against.

Pollsters said the final result could still change radically and neither the church-backed "no" lobby nor government and opposition-supported "yes" lobby was claiming victory.

It was set to be the closest result in Irish electoral history and showed the nation evenly split between keeping traditional Irish family values and moving into line with the rest of Europe.

Counting continued through the afternoon with early results showing that the capital Dublin, traditionally more liberal in outlook, had backed ending the ban while rural areas had heeded the advice of their local clergy.

The poll brought home the deep-rooted power of the church, which said legalising divorce would encourage marital break-up and damage children.

"It's a very tight call and I don't think we are going to be able to call it for a very long time yet," Deputy Prime Minister Dick Spring said as votes were counted.

Polling officials said the outcome was likely to depend on around 30,000 of the nation's 2.6 million votes. A heavy turnout of more than 60 per cent was reported in some areas.

Counting of ballots from

some rural areas did not start until late morning and could affect the overall result.

Mr. Spring, who said it was the most important vote in his 15-year political career, said the Roman Catholic Church had made a vigorous campaign against government proposals to give separated couples a chance to remarry and start again.

A survey by the Irish Times newspaper as votes were cast Friday showed 46 per cent were against it, six per cent were undecided and a further six per cent refused to specify.

The Times figures supported polls in the run-up to the vote which showed that opponents of divorce had clawed back votes from the "yes" lobby, which had a healthy 62 per cent of sup-

port only one month ago.

"Why should Ireland be the only country in Europe, if not the world, where divorce is banned?" one voter told Irish Radio as the polls closed late Friday night.

A similar referendum in 1986 was defeated by a 2-1 majority despite early polls showing a majority of people favoured ending the constitutional ban on divorce in place since the foundation of the Catholic state seven decades ago.

The Catholic Church warned voters that a "yes" vote would wreck families and encourage unhappy couples to split, putting their children at risk.

But the "yes" lobby said that it would give separated couples — there are an estimated 80,000 — a second chance and give their offspring a more secure future.



Princess Diana shakes hands with Argentine President Carlos Menem at the presidential residence in Buenos Aires. Mr. Menem was accompanied by his daughter Zulema Maria Menem (AFP photo)

Mother's insults mar Diana's Argentine goodwill visit

BUENOS AIRES (R) — Princess Diana's debut as Britain's goodwill ambassador lost some of its sparkle Friday when an elderly Argentine woman whose son died in the Falklands War screamed obscenities at her.

"Bitch you bitch" Lucia Mastrolanni, 75, shouted in Spanish at the princess as she began a visit to a hospital.

"You daughter of a thousand whores, go away," she cried before being taken away by hospital staff in a wheelchair. Her son Luis died on the cruiser General Belgrano, sunk by a British submarine in the most controversial episode of the 1982 war.

The Princess of Wales did not flinch at the insults and kept up the smiles and compassion that have warmed an Argentine public initially indifferent to her four-day visit.

Wearing a pink tailored jacket and skirt, the 34-year-old estranged wife of heir-to-the-throne Prince Charles went on with her hospital visits then met President Carlos Menem, no stranger to scandal himself, for lunch at his Olivos Palace.

Princess Diana has left behind the scandal whipped up by her frank television interview Monday in which she confessed adultery with her riding instructor, questioned Prince Charles' fitness to be king and said the royal family treated her as an enemy.

While Britons believe she was not treated well, Princess Diana accepts she will never be queen and 'wants instead to begin a new role as a "queen of people's hearts" and goodwill ambassador by trying to help heal the wounds of the Falklands War.

Argentine Navy chief Adm. Enrique Molina Pico expressed sympathy for the woman who insulted Princess Diana.

"I understand and respect (her) personal feelings... And if the lady really suffered the loss of a son, which is a loss that is unparalleled, well, she expressed her feelings," he said at a memorial for sailors who died in the Falklands.

Similarly bitter feelings were expressed by the ex-combatants association, which accused Princess Diana of "coming to seduce public opinion (and) cast a smoke screen over the debate about the sovereignty of our Malvinas" — Argentina's name for the South Atlantic islands.

One local cable television station, Cronica, interrupted programmes to show the Argentine flag and the defiant slogan "the Malvinas are Argentine" to a military march from the war in which 800 Argentine servicemen lost their lives.

If Princess Diana has not managed to set at rest the ghosts of the Falklands War, she does seem to have warmed ordinary Argentines with her compassion on her marathon tour of hospitals, children's wards and charities.

"I think it's great she should come to see our country," said ice cream vendor Hector Rodriguez, who was doing good business among hundreds of journalists following her visit.

"We Argentines like her," said 24-year-old student

Mariano. Asked whether it was patriotic for Mr. Menem to receive a royal visitor from Argentina's former foe, he replied: "I don't really know if she does represent the crown anymore."

Princess Diana will return to Britain Sunday to face the anger of Buckingham Palace at her revelations of intimate secrets of the British monarchy.

Buckingham Palace announced Friday that princess Diana will spend Christmas with the rest of the royal family at the traditional gathering at Sandringham.

The palace said the princess herself decided to bring Prince William, 13, and Prince Harry, 11, to spend the holiday with Queen Elizabeth II at Sandringham, in Norfolk, although previously Princess Diana intended to take them elsewhere.

"The arrangements agreed by the Prince and Princess of Wales are that the two princes, William and Harry, spend Christmas with each of their parents in alternate years," a palace spokesman said.

"1995 is a year in which the princess has the children with her for Christmas. Her royal highness has asked to bring the children with her to Sandringham and they are very welcome," he said, without saying how much time they would spend there.

In recent years, the princess has spent Christmas with members of her own family or with friends.

In 1994, Princess Diana was on hand for the traditional exchange of gifts and for Christmas mass at Sandringham.

Kohl hits out at leftist rivals

BONN (AP) — In a preview of his party's election campaign, Chancellor Helmut Kohl Friday accused the main opposition party of endangering democracy by plotting an alliance with the former East German Communists.

Mr. Kohl, a Christian Democrat in power since 1982, has not said whether he will run in 1998 federal elections. But he suggested he would relish the fight after Germany's Social Democrats chose Oskar Lafontaine, widely considered a leftist, as their new leader last week.

"This is a good situation to my mind," Mr. Kohl told a news conference. "The lines are clearly drawn. This will be an exciting debate and I look forward to it."

The Social Democrats could gain power in 1998 by joining forces with the Greens Party and the PDS. The Greens posted sharp gains in last year's elections and they could hold the balance of power next time. PDS voters are mainly eastern Germans.

Mr. Lafontaine rejected Mr. Kohl's charges, saying

the Social Democrats would only consider local and state alliances with the Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS), the former East German Communists.

"Buddha is getting nervous," Mr. Lafontaine said after a party meeting, using an epithet the Social Democrats launched to portray Mr. Kohl as immobile.

Sources close to Mr. Lafontaine said he had postponed a Nov. 29 meeting with PDS leader Gregor Gysi because of schedule problems.

Etna spews hot ash and gas

CATANIA, Sicily (AP) — Scientists are keeping a close watch on Mount Etna after a series of minor eruptions on the Sicilian volcano.

Hot ash and gas spewed from one of the main craters early Wednesday, forming a cloud that stretched for more than 10 kilometres. Smaller eruptions followed.

In the small town of Acì-San Antonio, a layer of lava ash cloaked cars and roads.

But Mount Etna's renewed rumbles don't worry volcanologists because the active craters are near the

peak of the volcano and far from populated areas.

"Up to now we haven't had reason to fear for the safety of the population living in the surrounding area as the activity has all been above 3,000 metres (9,900 feet) whereas the nearest towns are at 2,000 metres (6,600 feet)," said Eugenio Binti, a researcher at the International Institute of Volcanology in Catania.

"Ashes can travel farther than lava, but the quantities that have reached the towns these days are not such as to harm them in any way," he said.

But Antonio Nicolosi, a guide for adventurous tourists wishing to visit the crater, complained: "I'm fed up with all these ashes. I just have time to sweep my house and wash my car before a new shower of lava rocks and ashes falls again."

The activity has been limited to two craters — one on the northeast side and the so-called "Bocca Nuova," or new mouth, which opened 20 years ago. There has been no marked seismic activity.

General ordered to reveal Guevara's burial site

LA PAZ, Bolivia (R) — Bolivia's military high command ordered a retired army general Friday to reveal the burial site of legendary leftist revolutionary Ernesto Che Guevara.

It said in a statement that General Mario Vargas Salinas had the "personal responsibility to show the whereabouts" of the remains of the Argentine-born Guevara, Fidel Castro's deputy in the Cuban Revolution.

Gen. Vargas, said to be the only living witness to the 1967 burial of Guevara's semi-burnt and mutilated

body, denied Thursday that he had told the local newspaper La Razon and the New York Times that Guevara was buried in a mass grave on a landing strip in Vallegrande, 770 kilometres from La Paz.

The denial came after President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada ordered troops to find the site and exhumate Guevara's remains to give him a Catholic burial.

Guevara led a nine-month insurrection in the Bolivian mountains and was executed by an army sergeant on Oct. 9, 1967, a day after he was captured by Bolivian

troops. In a statement authorised by the military and released Wednesday night, Gen. Vargas Salinas said he had never admitted to knowing "exactly where the guerrilla leader was buried."

The mayor of Vallegrande, in the foothills of the eastern Nancuazu Mountains where Guevara had his base, said local people would not allow removal of the corpse. If the burial site is found, the city will build a mausoleum there, Mayor Ever Cabrera told reporters.

Military accounts say Guevara was killed in the

Nancuazu Mountains with 19 Bolivian guerrillas, 13 Cubans, three Peruvians and a German woman with the nom de guerre Tania.

Asked about the case, Cuban Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Elena Ferriol said: "We have been following this with great attention."

Guevara is probably the most revered hero of the Cuban Revolution. A giant portrait of the doctor who fought with Fidel Castro's rebels in the Sierra Maestra adorns a ministry building overlooking Havana's huge Revolution Square.

Squabble in Colombian military amid political crisis

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — A power struggle in the top ranks of Colombia's military has exposed internal feuds in the normally secretive institution and triggered fears of a coup.

Commanders loyal to President Ernesto Samper — who has been weakened by a political scandal — won the first round recently when a handful of generals who opposed him were forced to retire, according to military experts. But renegades inside or close to the security forces may be aiming to destabilise the government.

Defense Minister Juan Carlos Esguerra said these elements were possibly involved in the Nov. 2 assassination of Alvaro Gomez Hurtado, a former senator and ambassador to Washington.

"There are some indications ... that some people linked to security forces could have had something to do with that deed," Mr. Esguerra said in an interview Thursday. Among the signs: A car carrying soldiers was seen in the Bogota neighbourhood where Mr. Gomez was gunned down.

A shadowy group calling itself "Dignity For Colombia" claimed responsibility for the killing, and for an attack in September that wounded an attorney defending Samper against accusations he used Cali drug cartel money to win 1994 elections.

There several theories about the group. One is that they are drug traffickers angry at Mr. Samper for taking their money and then jailing six cartel leaders this year. A second theory is that right-wing elements in the government or military

want to destabilise the government and impose their own rule. And some speculate that members of Mr. Samper's inner circle ordered the attacks to distract attention from the president's political troubles.

Mr. Esguerra said rebels and common criminals are also possible suspects. Colombia's military has rarely interfered openly in politics. It has mounted only two coups this century. But coup rumours were so prevalent in recent weeks that military leaders took pains to deny them publicly.

A purge this month of four generals loyal to Gen. Harold Bedoya, the commander of the army who has had tense relations with Mr. Samper, strengthened the hand of the armed forces commander, Gen. Camilo Zuniga, analysts said.

Gen. Zuniga is a strong Samper ally. But the generals who were ousted in what the government called a "routine" change of command did not go down quietly. Several complained they were being ousted despite spotless records.

The purge of the generals apparently resolved one power struggle in the military, but it put the armed forces more firmly into the hands of those who back a president accused of corruption.

And with Samper distracted by his political scandal, other fights might break out in the top ranks.

"Those who watch the bulls from the bullring wall are convinced that there are still worse days to come," said the newsmagazine Semana.

Director Louis Malle dies

LOS ANGELES (R) — French film director Louis Malle, one of the "new wave" of movie-makers of the 1960s, died at his home in Beverly Hills, a spokeswoman for his publicist said Friday.

She said Malle, 63, died Thursday night of complications from lymphoma, and his body would be returned to France for burial.

Malle was diagnosed with cancer of the lymph nodes in August. Doctors also found he was suffering from immune deficiency as a result of the cancer.

Malle's wife Candice Bergen, star of hit television comedy Murphy Brown, was accompanying his body to France along with their young daughter Chloe, Pat Kingsley of the publicity firm PMK said.

Malle had been in the vanguard of the so-called "new wave" of directors from Europe that ultimately reshaped Hollywood, taking it from the song-and-dance extravaganzas of the 1940s and '50s into the harsh reality of more recent decades.

Along the way, his sensitivity and ability to bring out the best in actors, either through bullying, cajoling or pleading, made him one of the most enduring directors in Hollywood and Europe.

But despite his interna-

tional acclaim as a director and screenwriter, Malle never won an Academy Award. He directed *Silent World*, (*Le Monde Du Silence*) on the work of French undersea explorer Jacques Cousteau, which won the Oscar for best documentary in 1957, but the award went to Cousteau as producer.

He was nominated for an Oscar for best original screenplay in 1972, for *Murmur Of The Heart*, (*"Sonfle Au Coeur"*), a highly controversial film about mother-son incest, and again in 1981 as best director for *Atlantic City*, starring Burt Lancaster and Susan Sarandon.

His last nomination, for best original screenplay, came in 1987 for the highly acclaimed *"Au Revoir Les Enfants."*

Among Malle's other notable films were *Elevator To The Gallows* 1958, *The Lovers*, 1958 *Mon Oncle*, 1958 *Zazie Dans Le Metro*, 1961 *Lacombe, Lucien*, 1975 *Pretty Baby* (with a young Brooke Shields playing a child prostitute) in 1978 *Dinner With Andre*, 1981 *Crackers*, 1984 and the sexually charged *Dangerous* in 1993.

He was associated with more than 100 films as either screenwriter, director or actor.

Malle was born on Oct.



A picture dated May 22, 1993 of French film director Louis Malle and his wife, American actress Candice Bergen, attending the Cannes Film festival. Malle has died in California at the age of 63 (AFP photo)

30, 1932, in Thumieres in northern France, where his mother was a sugar heiress and his father directed sugar refineries.

After high school he attended the Sorbonne University in Paris where he studied political science, but after two years he realised film was to be his life and switched to the Institut Des Hautes Etudes Cinematographiques.

After university he became an assistant to Cousteau, filming marine life in the Red Sea, the

Arabian Gulf and the Indian Ocean in 1954 and 1955.

He married Anne-Marie Deschodt and the couple had two children, Manuel and Justine, before they divorced in 1967.

In 1980 he married Bergen, who became famous and won an armload of Emmys for her role as the aggressive television reporter Murphy Brown in the hit television series. He did a cameo playing himself on the show recently, saying of the Bergen character: "I pity the man who has to live with her."

Pentecost, Mack And Mabel top London theatre awards

LONDON (AP) — Pentecost, David Edgar's weighty play about the formation of a new Europe, and Mack And Mabel, the 1974 Jerry Herman Broadway musical, were surprise winners at the 40th annual Evening Standard Drama Awards. Pentecost, scoring the 1995 season's best play award, had faced stiff competition from David Hare's *Skylight* and Sebastian Barry's *The Steward Of Christendom*. Mack And Mabel, winning best musical, opened earlier this month to mixed reviews that would have doomed it on Broadway, with most critics admiring Herman's score but faulting director Paul Kerryson's staging. The acting prizes went to two performers at the Royal National Theatre — Geraldine McEwan, a tipsy Lady Wishfort in Congreve's *The Way Of The World*, and Michael Gambon for his burly sly fox in Ben Jonson's *Volpone*. Marthe Warchus, who staged *Volpone*, was named best director for that play and for Henry V, which had been staged by the Royal Shakespeare Company. Best comedy was Patrick Marber's *Dealer's Choice*, another National staging. The play, set among a group of poker-playing restaurant employees in London, is expected off Broadway next fall.

Jackie Chan gets honorary degree

HONG KONG (AP) — No sweat pants. No sleeveless, tight T-shirt. No sunbust. Instead, Jackie Chan was dressed Friday in a mortar board, hood and gown. The Hong Kong kungfu master sat quietly through a solemn 75-minute graduation ceremony at Baptist University to receive an honorary doctorate in social sciences. But even during the ceremony, Chan, who left home at age 7 to be apprenticed to a drama group and had little formal education, remained the centre of attention. When he was touched on the head by Gov. Chris Patten, who awarded the degree, Chan won the longest and loudest ovation of the day. Outside the hall, screaming fans shouted "da guo," — big brother. Graduates in gowns and hoods elbowed reporters to get better photos of their idol. Chan told reporters that he was excited and happy to receive the degree. "I've won so many movie awards. But never in my life before have I thought of getting an academic degree," he said. "I am quite ashamed of myself. I haven't studied much. I am not good at either English or Chinese. I am thinking whether I am worthy of this degree," he said. The university said it selected Chan for the degree "for being an epitome of the striving human spirit, for his distinguished achievements in the film industry and his unrelenting efforts to seek improvement and excellence."

Peru lawmaker does not wear them

LIMA (AFP) — Peruvian lawmaker and former actress Susy Diaz said that she doesn't wear panties (knickers) because they are uncomfortable and give her colds. "When I wear panties, they crawl up and I feel like I am being raped," she said. "That's why I'm sitting with my legs crossed because some other legislators look down on me." Ms. Diaz said that she began going without panties when she was just a girl, and that people should not judge her on her underwear — or lack of it. "I have come to work, with panties or without them, for the poorest people in Peru; for the people who voted for me, and I believe that I will not let them down."

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Paisley: N. Ireland peace is surrender to IRA

BELFAST (R) — The most vocal opponent of the deadlocked Northern Ireland peace process said Saturday that Britain had surrendered to IRA guerrillas trying to end British rule of the province.

"This is not peace. This is a shameful process of deluding the people while they surrender to the IRA," Ian Paisley, leader of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), said.

He was speaking as British and Irish officials prepared to meet in London to try to steer the peace process out of deadlock caused by British demands that the IRA disarm to gain entry to a new round of talks on a lasting Northern Ireland settlement.

They are trying to find ways round the deadlock to allow Irish and British Prime Ministers John Major and Tony Blair to hold summit talks to unveil a new phase of the peace drive.

The stalemate has cast a shadow over the visit to Britain, Northern Ireland and Ireland next week of U.S. President Bill Clinton, whose support for the peace has been crucial.

Mr. Clinton's visit, organised months ago, was seen as a chance to celebrate peace since the IRA and its Protestant loyalist rivals called truces 15 months ago but the continuing deadlock has raised fears that it may be fragile.

Mr. Paisley accused the British government of capitulating to the demands of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) and its political arm, Sinn Féin.

"It is not peace. It is a phoney peace held in place by concessions to those most capable of breaking the peace. It is neither honourable, just, permanent, nor reasonable. It is a surrender process which we must resist," Mr. Paisley said.

He said Northern Ireland's Protestant Unionist majority, which wants the province to remain part of Britain, should try to establish their own settlement free of "interference" from Washington, Dublin or London.

The British government had dangled to Sinn Féin by trying to involve it in the peace process whereas the views of Unionists had been spurned, he alleged.

Mr. Paisley was speaking to his party's annual conference in Craigavon, south of Belfast. The DUP has three seats in the British parliament and has been suspicious of the peace process ever since the IRA ceasefire.

The larger Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) has given the peace a grudging welcome but says the IRA must disarm and disband if Protestants are to sit down at the negotiating table with them.

Britain says the IRA must start handing over its guns because a peace conference without the Unionists would be pointless and nothing could be agreed.

Sinn Féin says the IRA will not surrender and wants the issue shelved until all-party talks, not made a precondition for his party's joining them.



A Sri Lankan Tamil policeman keeps vigil in a bunker in the eastern town of Batticaloa as tension mounts in the region amid stepped up rebel attacks against the police and security forces (AFP photo)

Russian government protests at American diplomat's article

MOSCOW (AP) — The Russian government Friday issued a formal protest over an article in a local paper by a U.S. diplomat in Moscow saying the Yeltsin government does not stand for either democracy or reform.

In a piece entitled "The New Russian Regime First Secretary Thomas Graham," the head of the embassy's political section, describes today's Russia as an oligarchy in which economic and political power rest in the hands of just a few groups or "clans."

Among them, he writes, is the Kremlin circle dominated by President Boris Yeltsin's bodyguard and confidante, Gen. Alexander Korzhakov.

The article, which covers nearly a full page, was published in Russian Thursday in the newspaper Nezavisimaya Gazeta.

According to the ITAR-TASS news agency, the Russian Foreign Ministry made a formal protest Friday to an unnamed representative of the embassy.

"In response to a request from the Foreign Ministry, the political counsellor of the American embassy, William Burns, went to the ministry to discuss the article," embassy spokesman

Richard Hoagland confirmed.

Mr. Hoagland would not discuss what was said in the meeting. The ITAR-TASS news agency said the ministry filed a formal protest and asked for "an official, public explanation."

Although Mr. Graham's analysis was critical of the Mr. Yeltsin government, nothing he wrote has not been said before in Russia by Russians. For a foreign diplomat, however, the comments might be considered provocative.

Mr. Graham was reluctant to discuss the article. He said it had been cleared by the U.S. State Department, but that "those are my own views and not those of the government."

According to Hoagland, U.S. Ambassador Thomas Pickering said the same thing: Graham "wrote the article in his capacity as a private citizen. It does not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. government."

Mr. Graham says post-Soviet Russia reached a turning point in October 1993 with Mr. Yeltsin's bloody confrontation with his enemies in parliament.

Mr. Yeltsin disbanded the parliament, then turned tanks and troops on rebel-

lious, hardline legislators holed up in the Russian White House.

Mr. Graham writes that a "new elite" emerged from the 1993 crisis and began consolidating power in the Kremlin, reversing the loosening of central control that had marked the Gorbachev era.

An expert in Soviet and Russian affairs, Mr. Graham served at the embassy here from 1987 to 1990, when Mikhail Gorbachev was Soviet president. Mr. Graham returned to Russia last year.

In addition to the Korzhakov group, he lists several other powerful groups: The "oil and gas clan" led by Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and the "Moscow group" led by Mayor Yuri Luzhkov.

Mr. Graham writes that the December parliamentary election and the 1996 presidential election threaten the "new regime" because outsiders like the Communists and nationalists could win.

At the same time, he writes, Mr. Yeltsin needs the elections to keep up appearances and maintain relations with the West.

Dhaka parliament dissolution sparks violence

DHAKA (R) — Jubilant Bangladeshi opposition parties hailed the president's dissolution of parliament and urged the government Saturday to step down in favour of a caretaker administration before fresh elections.

Authorities imposed tight security in the capital Dhaka and other main cities after more than 50 people were injured in clashes between opposition and pro-government activists in the wake of the assembly's dissolution.

Police said they feared more violence as the opposition was expected to step up pressure for a transfer of power.

President Abdur Rahman Biswas dissolved parliament Friday night following a lengthy quarrel between Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia and opposition parties over future elections. But he has asked the premier to stay until the next polls due by March.

Opposition parties say elections could only be held fairly if Mrs. Khaleda goes, but the prime minister

rejects this demand as unconstitutional.

Mizanur Rahman Chowdhury, acting head of the opposition Jatiya Party, called on Mrs. Khaleda to resign at a rally Saturday after an eight-hour strike in Dhaka.

"Now it's time for you to leave office, handing power to a neutral caretaker successor for holding the next elections," he said.

The Dhaka strike was called to protest against alleged lack of medical care for a jailed Jatiya Party chairman, former President Hosain Mohammad Ershad.

Mr. Ershad has been suffering from acute jaundice since Nov. 4 but the government has refused to take him to hospital from prison despite advice from his doctors.

A source in Mrs. Khaleda's Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) said the premier was due to meet her party leaders Saturday night to discuss future plans amid speculation she might reduce her cabinet to a minimum or

dissolve it altogether.

Opposition leaders said Saturday they would wait for at least 24 hours before making their own move to bring a transfer of power to a caretaker administration.

Sheikh Hasina of the main opposition group Awami League described the dissolution of parliament as a "people's victory."

She called on the government to accept her demand for handing power to a neutral authority, preferably headed by Chief Justice Abu Taher Mohammad Aizal, "without further delay."

"Otherwise, prepare to suffer a massive showdown," Mrs. Hasina said in a statement.

Mrs. Khaleda has invited all opposition groups, which refused to participate in parliamentary by-elections planned for Dec. 15, to take part in the general election.

The election is not due until March 1996, but government sources said it could be held earlier in January or February.

Tamil rebels fire gas bombs to stop Sri Lankan army

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lankan Tamil Tiger rebels, in a desperate bid to prevent government forces from capturing the rebel citadel of Jaffna, have attacked advancing troops with an unidentified gas, a military statement said Saturday.

"Rebels used gas against troops in the Ariyalai area," the statement said. "This did not cause a problem to troops as they were well prepared for gas attacks."

A military spokesman told Reuters the type of gas had not yet been identified.

Fearing possible rebel gas attacks, troops generally go in to high-risk areas wearing gas masks and some troops have been specially trained to deal with gas attacks, he said.

Analysts in Colombo told Reuters that the army was expecting a gas attack when they tried to capture Jaffna, where the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have been running a virtual mini-state for nearly a decade.

LTTE guerrillas previously attacked troops with a gas in 1990 in the eastern Batticaloa district, they said. Troops did not suffer serious injuries from this attack either, they added.

The rebels said Saturday they were putting up fierce resistance to advancing government troops who are consolidating on the northern and eastern town limits of Jaffna.

"The army will not be allowed to advance as they wish," said a rebel radio broadcast, monitored by Reuters in the government-controlled frontline town of Vavuniya.

The army cut off Jaffna City completely this week by sealing off the Vavuniya division, one of three divisions which make up the northern peninsula. An estimated 2,000 guerrillas were said to be holed up in the town with no way out.

The army statement said a large number of guerrillas attacked troops in the Ariyalai and Colombuburai

areas, on the eastern town limits of Jaffna, shortly before midnight Friday.

"It is clearly evident that the LTTE were making a desperate attempt to extricate their cadres trapped within the Jaffna town area," the statement said.

It said four soldiers were killed in the attacks and 20 wounded. The army recovered 20 guerrilla bodies but ground troops estimate at least 50 more were killed, it added.

An LTTE statement issued by its London office Friday said some 200,000 civilians had fled the Vavuniya area and were living as refugees in the Vadamarachchi and Thenmarachchi divisions of the peninsula and also in Kilinochchi on the mainland.

Also Saturday an Air Lanka commercial airliner bound for Hong Kong via Bangkok carrying 300 passengers was delayed by about four hours at the Colombo Airport after a

false bomb threat, officials said.

"The plane was released after a thorough check. We found it to be a false alarm," director of airport operations Air Vice Marshal Maurice Fernando told Reuters.

Air Vice Marshal Fernando said security at the airport was at its "maximum possible" following threats from the LTTE to blow it up.

A bomb planted at the airport earlier this year, allegedly by a shadowy group called the Ellalan Force, believed to be a front for the LTTE, failed to explode.

The group has threatened the island's tourist targets and last year detonated small bombs in two Colombo tourist hotels.

More than 50,000 people have been killed since the LTTE launched its war for a separate Tamil homeland in 1983.

Aristide will not rule out three more years in office

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (R) — Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide indicated Friday that he will consider staying in power for three more years as demanded by his supporters despite next month's presidential election.

His careful comments marked the first time that Mr. Aristide has publicly said he might remain in office to make up for the years he was ousted by the military.

When he was restored to power in October 1994 by a U.S.-led multinational military force, Mr. Aristide repeatedly said he would comply with the Haitian constitution and leave office when his term ends in February 1996.

But to the cheers of hundreds of left-wing supporters Friday, Mr. Aristide endorsed a proposal that he remain in office to serve out the three years he spent in exile following a 1991 mili-

tary coup.

"If you want three years, I will not turn my back on you," Mr. Aristide said at a meeting at the presidential palace with delegates from this week's national conference to discuss Haiti's political, economic and social problems.

But, he added immediately, "if you want elections, I will not turn my back on you."

The crowd, made up mostly of grassroots supporters of Mr. Aristide's Lavalas Party, broke into excited cheers and began chanting, "three more years three more years."

Mr. Aristide's remarks are likely to throw the campaign for the December 17 presidential election into turmoil. With less than a month remaining, there has been little campaigning by the 14 declared candidates.

Mr. Aristide did not specifically mention the election in his speech, and

gave no indication of whether he might try to postpone or reschedule them.

A U.S. diplomat expressed surprise at Mr. Aristide's speech, which came just one day after a three-hour meeting between the president and U.S. special adviser Anthony Lake.

"The policy of the United States has been predicated from the beginning on Aristide leaving office on Feb. 7, 1996," said the diplomat, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Mr. Aristide made it clear that he has not made a final decision on whether to remain in office, and that he would listen to the views of the private sector first.

"Nonetheless, the second part of my answer is that I think as do many people who are not here ... neither myself nor you make a whole," Mr. Aristide told his supporters. "My mission is a fragile one," he added.

"I try to weigh each word I say."

As part of an effort to broaden the national dialogue, Mr. Aristide said each of the 14 declared presidential candidates be given time on national television and radio to present their views.

Presidential candidate Rene Preval, a friend of Mr. Aristide who is running on the Lavalas ticket, was not present at the palace meeting, nor were any members of the business sector, which grudgingly accepted Mr. Aristide's return from exile.

Mr. Aristide was toppled from power by a 1991 military coup and remained in exile for three years. He was returned to power one year ago by multinational forces, and has served only two years of his five-year presidential term.

Haitian law forbids a president from running for a second consecutive term.

Seoul rally demands punishment for crackdown

SEOUL (R) — More than 1,000 South Koreans rallied in central Seoul Saturday, demanding President Kim Young-Sam implement a decision to set up a special law to punish his two predecessors for brutally cracking down on a civil uprising 15 years ago.

"We demand President Kim stick to his decision to punish the two masterminds behind the tragedy," demonstrators shouted.

They also called for Mr. Kim to designate a neutral prosecution team to handle the investigation into the 1980 bloody pro-democracy revolt.

"The government should immediately accept our call for a special prosecution team," said a speaker, who identified himself as a graduate student leader at Seoul City University.

Mr. Kim Friday ordered his ruling Democratic Liberal Party (DLP) to draft a special law to punish for-

mer Presidents Chun Doo Hwan and Roh Tae-Woo for crushing the revolt.

The pro-democracy uprising in the southwestern city of Kwangju, in which about 200 people were killed by official count, followed a 1979 military coup led by then army Major-Generals Chun and Roh.

Mr. Kim has been quoted by his aides as saying the military crackdown on the revolt had "tarnished the honour of the country and the people and immensely damaged the nation's pride."

The peaceful crowd, escorted by hundreds of riot police, marched to Myungdong Cathedral, a popular site for demonstrations, after gathering at a city park.

About 30 women, in traditional white mourning dresses, walked near the head of the column, clutching photographs of beloved ones they claimed were

killed during the incident.

Kim Chom-Rae, 51, held a picture of her father, who she presumes was killed by government soldiers.

"We've never found his body," she cried.

The demonstrators shouted: "Immediately send Chun Doo Hwan to jail like Roh."

Mr. Roh, Mr. Chun's immediate successor, is in custody on charges he accepted bribes totalling more than \$300 million during his 1988-93 term.

Mr. Chun has kept a low profile since returning in 1990 from a two-year self-imposed exile in a remote Buddhist monastery in the eastern part of the country. He also admitted to corruption during his term.

President Kim's decision to punish the two came as an abrupt turnaround from his earlier stance asking the public to let those blamed for the brutal crackdown be judged by future historians.

Earlier Saturday, Mr. Kim told DLP officials that the special legislation was designed partly to improve the party's image.

"The special law's political meaning will be severing (the party's) links to the coup and the Kwangju massacre," a party statement quoted Mr. Kim as saying.

Mr. Kim has been criticised by opposition parties and student activists for his January 1990 decision to merge his opposition group with Mr. Roh's party.

The DLP, created through the merger, later nominated Mr. Kim as its candidate in the December 1992 presidential election.

The DLP said this week it would change its name before parliamentary elections next year, in a signal of the beginning of political reforms needed to improve an image tainted by political legacies. It has yet to be chosen.

Rwanda not to renew U.N. troops' mandate

KIGALI (R) — Rwanda said Saturday it did not want to renew the mandate of some 1,800 U.N. peacekeeping troops expiring in two weeks in the central African country laid to waste by last year's civil war and genocide.

In a statement that runs counter to the wishes of the international community, which want the force to stay, Foreign Minister Anastase Gasana told U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali and the Security Council the mandate would expire on Dec. 8.

Rwanda needed technical help to reconstruct the country and not soldiers, said the statement, broadcast on state-run radio.

Rwanda's security was the business of its own government and not of the U.N.

Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR), it said.

"Since UNAMIR is a peacekeeping mission, the government has come to the conclusion that it does not respond to our priority needs," said Mr. Gasana's statement.

On Friday, the U.N. special envoy to Rwanda, Shaharyar Khan, said the peacekeeping force was expected to leave after its mandate expired, barring last-minute negotiations with the government.

Rwanda's government wants the U.N. force to leave behind all its equipment, including hundreds of costly four-wheel-drive vehicles, generators, computers and other machinery.

"It's like Christmas, they are all fighting for the

spoils," said one U.N. diplomat.

U.N. officials say the government is likely to get some of the equipment, but not much.

There is residual resentment in Rwanda against U.N. forces for failing to stop last year's genocide of a million Tutsis and moderate Hutus, during which the number of peacekeepers was cut to a minimum.

The new government also accuses some U.N. agencies and non-governmental agencies of competing for scarce funds and doing little more than sustaining their own existence.

Senior diplomats said Western donors including the United States, the biggest funder of the U.N. force, were negotiating with the government to renew

the U.N. mandate to help repatriate two million refugees who fled the country after the genocide.

Genocidal killings erupted after Hutu strongman Juvénal Habyarimana was assassinated in April last year. His followers, mainly the army and militiamen, took up arms and hunted down his suspected killers.

With a quarter of Rwanda's population still in exile and genocide perpetrators threatening a comeback, some diplomats say a U.N. withdrawal will heighten security fears.

In refugee camps in Zaire, Tanzania and Burundi, extremists are keeping the Hutu majority alive with an insurgency that is increasing instability.

Russian Far East hit by quake — TASS

MOSCOW (R) — An earthquake rocked Russia's Far East Sakhalin Island Friday evening but there were no immediate reports of casualties or damage, ITAR-TASS news agency said Saturday.

The agency quoted the Emergency Situations Ministry in Moscow as saying the quake measured up to 8.5 on the Richter Scale, which would make it one of the biggest in history. But ministry officials contacted by Reuters declined to con-

firm or deny this.

Pyotr Savin, a Sakhalin Regional Administration official, told TASS there had been no casualties. "Everything is absolutely normal and calm," he said.

Other officials in the Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk Regional Centre told Reuters by telephone that the earthquake was not serious. "There is nothing. This is not serious," one said.

TASS said a series of tremors had been registered in the Sakhalin region at

10.00 p.m. Moscow time (1900 GMT). The epicentre was about 100 kilometres east of the island of Iturup, part of the Kurile chain just north of Japan.

"The strength of the tremor on Iturup reached 8.5 on the Richter Scale," it said.

This would be stronger than a quake in May registering 7.5 that killed 1,989 people on Russia's Sakhalin Island, almost totally destroying the town of Nemegorsk, eight time

zones and 7,000 kilometres east of Moscow.

Just 1,208 people survived the quake in Nemegorsk, which trapped people in their homes and turned Soviet-era apartment blocks into neat lines of rubble.

Japan's Meteorological Agency said Friday that a quake measuring 6.6 on the Richter Scale had jolted east and south Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost island.

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Big brothers no more

WHEN THE Middle East peace talks started in the fall of 1991 in Madrid, Jordan called for and attended all Arab coordination meetings that were held before and during the talks. These coordination sessions, however, soon broke down when it became apparent to the Palestinians and the Jordanians that Damascus, which decides for Lebanon, wanted to decide for Jordan and the PLO how to conduct their talks with Israel. Syria still maintains active opposition to the Palestinian peace deals with Israel through the encouragement and sheltering of all Palestinian factions that oppose the PLO-Israeli agreements. But Syria was completely unhappy that Jordan wants to sign a peace treaty with Israel, restoring its rights to land and water. Now the Arab neighbour is unhappy again because Jordan wants to undo what Syria contributed to in 1991, namely to end Iraq's plight. With Syria edging closer towards a deal with Israel, Damascus has now changed its rhetoric from criticising Jordan's peace with Israel to criticising Amman over its stance on Iraq.

The differences between the two Arab countries on Iraq come in the wake of Syrian charges that Jordan has sinister plans for Iraq. Syria is distorting a recent call by His Majesty King Hussein to preserve Iraq's territorial integrity through a federation among the three principal regions of the country, by projecting the King's call as one that would lead for the partitioning of Iraq.

The real threat to Iraq's unity was never the making of Jordan. It was the natural and logical consequence of the Gulf conflict in which Syria's role cannot be forgotten. One has to be blind not to see that there now exists a de facto separation among the three major components of Iraq, the Kurds in the north, the Sunnis in the middle and the Shiites in the south.

There is nothing that would please Jordan more than to turn the clock back and restore Iraq's unity under the banner of democracy, pluralism and respect for human rights. The best thing to Iraq's current disunity on ethnic and religious grounds is to forge a solid de jure federation among the three major parties that would preserve the territorial integrity of the country. At a time when the Iraqi constitution itself concedes that the country is a binational state composed of Arab and Kurdish peoples, federation could become an effective formula to give genuine expression to this fact and at the same time maintain Iraq as a united country that can play a positive role in shaping the future of the Middle East. What seems to disturb our northern neighbour most, though, is to see an end to an era of old-fashioned hegemony that characterised inter-Arab relations for decades. It seems that it has yet to dawn on Syria that the most archaic rules of the game in Middle Eastern politics are gone forever. The syndrome of big brother in Arab relations has been broken and should be discarded for all times. What we would like to see instead is the replacement of such old methods of conducting bilateral relations by contemporary ones based on the principles of equality and national interest. Syria is an important Arab neighbour with which we aspire to have the best of relations on all fronts. The Syrian leadership needs to recognise that there will be no return to an era when the relations between the two countries were imbalanced for its own interest. Both countries should aspire at this moment to tone down rhetoric against one another and replace it with high statesmanship that would preempt the current wave of animosity.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

AL RAY daily Saturday expressed surprise over Syria's current media campaign against Jordan for its involvement in the ongoing peace process. Such a campaign, said the paper, can only create a situation characterised by enmity and hostility between the two countries. Jordan is trying to avoid any friction with Syria and any other Arab country because the Kingdom is oriented towards re-establishing solidarity among the Arab states, benefiting all Arab people, said the daily. The Syrian campaign, said the paper, is being launched at a time when all indications point to the fact that Syria and Israel are moving closer towards a settlement, ending decades of hostility. There is clear evidence that Syria is seeking a settlement now before the coming Israeli elections which could result in unfavourable results to the Arab side, according to the daily.

A COLUMNIST in Al Dustour criticised the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) for announcing plans to force telephone subscribers of the limited number of phone calls they used to have each year in return for paying the telephone service fees. As of the beginning of 1996, the TCC will end the free phone calls service from which the majority of people benefit, and instead it will reduce charges on international calls, said Mohammad Daoud. Only a minority of people and the major businesses benefit from the reduction of charges and a majority of subscribers will suffer from the termination of the free calls service, he pointed out.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

By Dr. Fahed Al Fanek

Fragmented Middle East looks to Europe

THE NEW expression "Middle East region" is used to mean the 21 Arab countries plus Israel and Iran. Turkey is looking for a future as an integral part of Europe not the Middle East.

The Arab World failed over the past 50 years in forging any sort of union or a common market in spite of the existence of the infrastructure in the form of the Arab League and more than 20 subordinate institutions covering all activities and sectors, over and above the single language, the common history and the mutual economic interest.

Therefore, the addition of Israel and Iran only will invite more fragmentation and polarisation. By no means can Israel and Iran achieve the miracle of regional cooperation and economic integration.

As far as Iran is concerned, there is nothing to worry about. Like Iraq, Iran is now subject to American policy of "dual containment" formulated by Martin Indyk, the American ambassador to Israel, then a national security advisor to President Bill Clinton. Therefore Iran is in the quarantine for the time being. We can forget it for the purposes of building a new integrated Middle East. The only newcomer to the Middle East is Israel. This simple fact explains the sudden American interest in stressing regional cooperation and organising a series of Middle East and North Africa (MENA) summits as an alternative to Arab summit conferences which have collapsed since 1990.

Western analysts and commentators sometime like to talk about the Middle East as a bloc or a region. Its vast

area, they say, is 15 million square kilometres. Its population includes some 350 million or six per cent of mankind. It is very rich in natural resources as two thirds of the world's known reserves are lying underneath its soil. Others go further to mention the average per capita income which is meaningless as long as it ranges between \$18,000 in a rich country like Kuwait and \$250 in a poor country like Sudan, i.e. the income of each Kuwaiti is on average 72 times more than the income of the Sudanese.

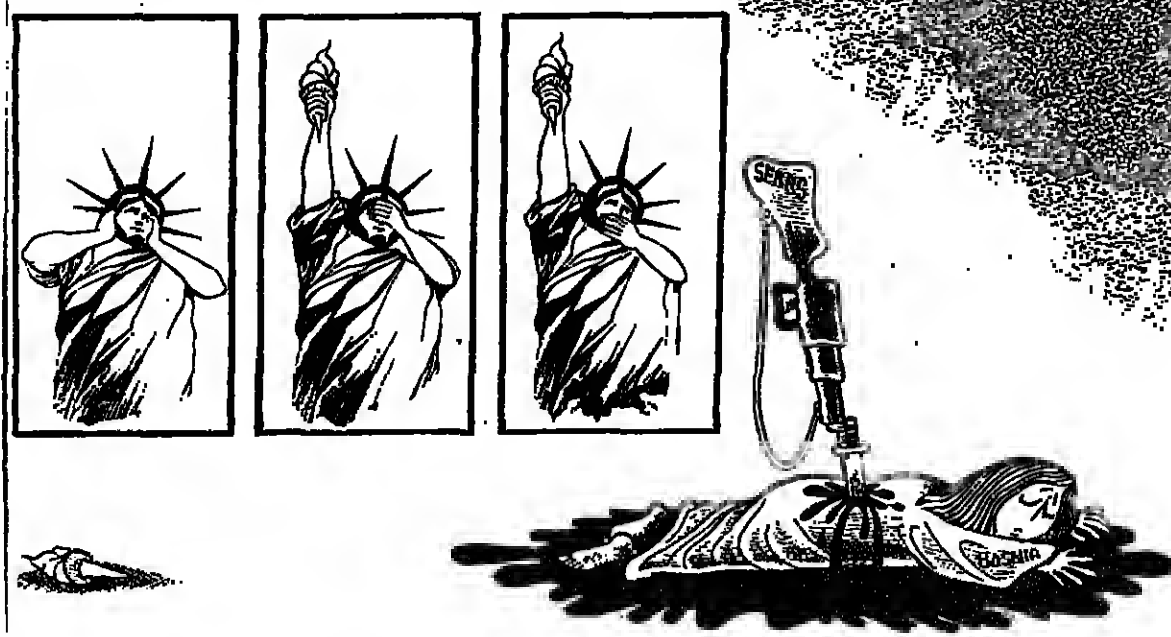
Europeans were right to deal with the countries of the Middle East on individual basis instead of collectively. They offered partnership by contract with each individual state. Had they chosen to approach the Middle East collectively, they would have been met with failure and frustration.

The Arab World failed to unite, integrate or cooperate. The addition of Israel to the Arab mix will make things even worse. Perhaps the road between the Arab Mashreq and the Arab Maghreb goes through Europe. Perhaps communications between the Fertile Crescent and the Arab Gulf sub-region is impossible except via Europe.

Let us give Europe a chance to bring us, the Arabs, together. Europe has the experience in the process of integration, slowly but surely. Europe has a self-interest in helping to develop the Arab countries economically, politically, and socially, so that we stop flooding Europe with out human surpluses and terror.

The Mediterranean conference in Barcelona, Spain, which will commence tomorrow, may prove to be a turning point in the history of the Middle East.

M. KAHIL



A plan that will not work

By G.H. Jansen

"IT IS not fair, but it better than war," that minimalist assessment of the Dayton peace accord by Alija Izetbegovic, president of Bosnia, is just about the best thing that can be said of the otherwise bad agreement.

And it is bad because, after being struggled over for four years plus three weeks of strenuous non-stop negotiations, it is a plan that will not work. Because it will not, and cannot, last and will, most probably, not even stop more fighting from breaking out again.

The West backs this miserable deal because it achieves two aims that were constant Western objectives throughout the four-year war. The Dayton plan disposes, once and for all, of any possibility of establishing a Muslim (or Islamic) state in the southeast corner of Europe. And that Western nightmare was ended and will be held in check by the Serbs. So nothing must be done that could hit the Serbs too hard, even if the Serbs stand "ethnic cleansing".

and their leaders who have been declared war criminals. These two solid achievements were obtained for the West by the U.S. at Dayton.

The Dayton plan will not work for many reasons but primarily because, as the Bosnian president said, it is not "fair". This can be seen most clearly in the plan's territorial division of Bosnia. The Serbs, the original aggressors, are given 49 per cent of the territory of Bosnia when demographically they should have been given at most 33 per cent. In addition two well-known Muslim enclaves, Srebrenica and Zepa, are handed over to the Serbs (the loss of Srebrenica is a particularly bitter pill for it was there that the Serbs carried out an especially brutal and large scale ethnic cleansing).

Furthermore, the territorial division is too complicated, as a glance at the new map of Bosnia reveals. A key element in this division is the carving out of two land corridors, one at Posavina in the north near the Danube and the second

in the south on the Dalmatian coast. The northern corridor is vital to the Serbs to ensure links between their two main areas, and they tried and failed to thicken it by military means but they are bound to try again. Corridors are always tricky and dangerous arrangements.

Perhaps the most unfair aspect of the fudge plan is its constitutional arrangements.

The West loudly proclaims that the plan does not promote the partition of Bosnia. It actually does. The state of Bosnia-Herzegovina remains one, yet split into two "entities", one Serb and the other Croat-Muslim, and if that is not effective de facto partition, what is?

And to make it worse the central Bosnian authority is comparatively weak. If this fragile Bosnia-Herzegovina does not collapse into two bits within its first year, that will be a miracle. A self-contradiction cannot long endure.

A fudge can only be maintained if both sides agree that there is a fudge

and will both pretend that it is not a fudge. That situation requires political restraint and maturity and goodwill. But in Bosnia where there is no goodwill only mutual suspicion and deeply felt hostility.

The West, and the U.S. especially, are banking on maintaining this precariously balanced structure, deploying a force of no less than 60,000 men, three divisions plus a conventional corps. And this corps, under firm NATO and not wholly U.N. control, will be fully equipped and combat-ready and will have a clear mandate to take vigorous action, if ever attacked.

But it has one fatal weakness — it is multinational, composed of British, French and U.S. contingents and those three countries have very different objectives and methods. The Americans are "softies" and thinking only how they will get out even before they have gone in. The French and British are firm but the French are more positive and forthright than the British.

The debacles fluctuation

By Dr. Yusuf Mansur

THE RECENT resignation of Mohammad Nabulsi, the governor of Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ), from his post has not gone unnoticed by the financial sector. In fact, to say that the sector is exhibiting signs of extreme anxiety is putting it mildly. Why? According to all schools of economic thought (especially the Monetarist school), the governor of any central bank can administer policies which affect the level of production, employment, inflation, spending, purchasing power, wages etc. In short, most economists in the Western hemisphere will agree that the head of the central bank is the most powerful economist in the nation. Therefore, any change in the chairmanship of the Central Bank of Jordan will undoubtedly spark speculation in the financial and business sectors and, as a result, be felt in every Jordanian household.

The governor of the Central Bank, a veteran of the bank for many years, was brought to serve as governor upon the collapse of the dinar's exchange rate in 1989. He was successful in stabilising the dinar and in thwarting a crisis of trust within the Jordanian banking system. For the past five years, his policy has been one of "tight money," which has helped reduce the inflation rate to slightly under four per cent. In other words, he discouraged the existence of large sums of liquidity, a policy that seemed to work in curbing inflation. However, recently this tight money policy has been under attack from many sources, the most vocal of which is the private banking sector which believes that the tightness of money is causing a recession in the stock prices of the fledgling Amman Financial Market (AFM).

Money is like any other commodity, its value in exchange decreases as it becomes abundant and increases as it becomes scarce; that is, if you have relatively more currency than products, then money, which is relatively abundant to you, becomes cheaper in exchange than goods, which become relatively scarce. Therefore, too much money in an economy means that people will be willing to exchange more currency for the same amount of products as before and inflation (a general increase in prices) thus occurs. The reverse is also true.

The Central Bank can tighten the money supply in Jordan by increasing the interest rate at which banks can borrow from the Central Bank (discount rate) or require that the rate of bank reserves increases thus forcing banks to lend less money, or

through the sale of government bonds to absorb excess money out of the economy. Of course the main reason for doing this is the elimination of inflationary pressures which are especially harmful to fixed income earners. Thus, the tight money policy has been especially beneficial to government employees (half of the labour force).

Dr. Nabulsi has been helped along so far in his tenure as governor by several factors.

• The Gulf war's repatriation of 400,000 Jordanians and their funds has caused the injection of close to \$1.6 billion into the Jordanian economy. This allowed banks access to large sums of liquidity in spite of Jordan's high interest rates.

• The increase in the demand for loans due to the population increase kept banks in the business of lending money in spite of high interest rates which normally would have decreased borrowing.

• The restructuring of the Jordanian economy, the peace agreement, and the influx of high profile investments from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit have helped improve the outlook of investors about the future of the Jordanian economy. Therefore, the Amman Financial Market has been subject to waves of optimism and goodwill which were able to revive it every now and then, in spite of a high interest rate in the bond market.

• The tying of the Jordanian dinar to the U.S. dollar as a way to alleviate fears of currency devaluation should pay off because, as the Economist's Intelligence Unit established with their Big Mac analysis, the dollar is at 30 per cent below its value. As a result, Jordan stands to win, in terms of currency stability, if the dollar rises.

Dr. Nabulsi was not far off the mark when he said to local newspaper that his job was to stabilise the exchange rate and reduce inflation. But, he can be criticised, and correctly so, for not easing the money supply now that the inflation rate has been lowered and Gulf funds have been absorbed into our ever burgeoning, yet economically stagnant construction sector.

His resignation has been well-timed to raise havoc with the investing public in light of the dollar tie-in policy and the precarious position of the Amman Financial Market. However, the smooth, immediate, and transparent transfer of the chairmanship to a person of similar abilities, business acumen, similar yet more flexible economic policies will save the country's monetary system the debacles of expectation generated by fluctuations.

LETTERS

Jordan's realistic stand

To the Editor:

IN HIS article "Why we stand to lose" (Jordan Times, Nov. 19), Fahed Al Fanek sensitively evokes many important issues that are on the minds of most Jordanians. The first half of his article deals broadly with external pressures and the many political and strategic dimensions of Jordan's peace treaty with Israel, while the second half primarily probes the future of Jordan's refugee elements and the wisdom of Jordan's current and projected trade and economic policies vis-a-vis the peace agreement. It is with regard to the first portion of the article that I wish to raise the following points.

Sharing Dr. Fanek's obvious concern of whether Jordan wrested the best possible deal from Israel, one is naturally self-compelled to explore the nature and specifics of the peace agreement. Invariably, conclusions will differ. Emotions (especially of the nationalistic sort), if allowed to predominate at the expense of objectivity in the formula leading to such conclusions, can greatly mark the final picture. Let us run through an abbreviated check-list of Jordan's declared objectives behind its decision to terminate the state of war with Israel, reach peace... and reach peace in the manner, time-frame and intensity in which it has done. If it was our aim to establish internationally-recognised boundaries, regain our captured territories and siphoned-off waters, the facts on the ground demonstrate that such aims have materialised. Conversely, if it had been our objective to have emerged from this peace with the sort of gains and status of a country that had never lost a war with Israel, then I'd be the first to agree with Dr. Fanek that we'd indeed "signed a peace treaty free of charge." A hollow treaty.

We move onto the issue — rather, assertion — that Jordan has "rushed" to promulgate peace with Israel with the effective outcome that we have not obtained anywhere near as good a deal as those "who preceded us" or, for that matter, those "who will follow us." While the claim is

accurate that we did in fact rush, a contextual placement of that step is very much called for. Omitting the fact that Egypt rushed into a similar predicament 15 years before we did, and the Palestinians almost one year before we did, does little for the cause of objectivity. Moreover, at those two landmark junctures, the former acted quite obviously to the sentiments of the entire Arab and Muslim worlds, while the latter took a detour from members of its own negotiating team in preference to a more private venue. Jordan has therefore "rushed" into its peace not because it is anaemic in its principles or fortitude, but out of a penetrating recognition that dawdling, posturing, "pre-tending" and "hesitating" would leave us strewn in the thorny shrubbery of political, strategic and economic oblivion while the "wagon-of-life" swiftly rolls by without us on board. In the comprehensive national debate that took place in the United Kingdom two years ago on whether the British should significantly deepen their economic, political and security ties with the European Union (EU) via the Maastricht Treaty, those in favour insightfully argued that, due to the ultimate inevitability of such a merger, it would be infinitely wiser to act promptly and forcefully, thereby securing a strong negotiating and "shaping" role during the "genesis of Maastricht." By thus being co-framers of the treaty alongside their EU partners, they would substantially increase their prospects of "surfing on the waves" of equitable terms rather than snorkeling beneath the petty froth of hesitation, taking whatever is dished out to them as a penalty for late entry and meek participation. I feel that by pouncing in the way we did, we similarly circumvented and preempted such an eventuality, thus securing the best possible deal. Not a karma-perfect deal, but the best realistically possible. We can harp all we like on morality and fairness, but, sadly, morality is a private personal concept not applicable among nations. Expediency and realism are paramount therefore. It is with a keen eye that we now observe some countries around us suddenly seeking ways of resuscitating hitherto dormant and "reluctant" state-policies in the hope of effecting an increased possibility of a similar "rush" into peace, in the

wake of recent events in Israel. This is tantamount to a recognition on their part that they've missed the optimal opportunity (the very one that we've seized) of striking a deal, as well as an eagerness to seize upon the less-than-optimal but "better-than-nothing" option of now preparing for a treaty. These are the very same parties for which Dr. Fanek foresees an acquisition of a "price," or reward, in return for their signature, while proposing that we've been hoodwinked into foregoing ours altogether as a result of a spasmodic hastiness and external pressures. Peace, after 50 many years of bitter enmity cannot be totally foolproof. Allowances have to be made for occasional crumbs, but time alone will hopefully prove that we've essentially got our bread buttered on the right side.

Mahmoud Izziddin Al Mufti
Amman.

Women rightly portrayed

To the Editor:

ON TUESDAY, Nov. 14, I had the great pleasure of watching a Jordan Television production: "Women in Jordan," which impressed me tremendously. Produced and directed by Jordanian women, the documentary was able, and in a most communicative manner, to present the immense scope of Jordanian women's abilities and potentials from the most remote to the most urban parts of the country. This documentary was very successful in that it portrayed women not only as active members of society and in all aspects of life but as human beings with important choices and decisions to make. Most importantly, it left me with a strong feeling of optimism towards the future. I would like to congratulate the producers and directors of this work and wish them the best of luck.

Silvia Hairabedian,
Amman.

Draft budget unveiled

(Continued from page 1)

additional local resources to national investments.

Setting specified programmes and performance that would allow for a clear assessment of government achievements.

Improving the conditions of civil servants and security personnel within the confines of available resources; and

Giving priority to gov-

ernment investments in infrastructure (roads, communications, water and electricity), and projects in tourism and culture as well as projects that benefit the youth.

"The draft budget not only meets the requirements of the economic reform programme but also the new dimensions brought in by the recent amendments to the income tax and sales tax laws as the investments promotion law," said Mr. Jaraneh.

Barak favours separation

(Continued from page 1)

leader Yasser Arafat or other Arab leaders at the Barcelona conference next week.

Mr. Barak will head the Israeli delegation to the two-day European Union (EU) Mediterranean conference which opens on Monday in the Spanish city.

"The new Israeli minister will meet the maximum number of foreign representatives during the Euro-Mediterranean conference, but up till now no definitive

schedule has been set," foreign ministry spokesman Daniel Shek said.

Israeli officials had said earlier Friday that Mr. Barak would meet Mr. Arafat on the sidelines of the forum as well as his Algerian counterpart, Mohammad Salah Dembri. The former chief-of-staff was also to meet Moroccan Foreign Minister Abdul Latif Filali and Tunisia's Habib Ben Yahia.

But Mr. Shek said that no meetings had been scheduled with Mr. Arafat or the Arab ministers.

PLO, Hamas

(Continued from page 1)

suicide bombings which killed scores of Israelis.

Last week several key Hamas leaders announced the formation of a political party, an offshoot of Hamas, which would oppose the peace deal peacefully.

The remaining local and exiled Hamas leaders have been preparing for a reconciliation dialogue with the authority to be held in Egypt.

Bank to the PNA but is to transfer security control of those villages in 1997.

"They forced my door open and took my innocent son," Shalikh Jaradat said referring to his son Hani Jaradat, a leading Islamic Jihad figure in the West Bank.

"I spoke to Palestinian officials and they told me this is security and they (Israelis) have the right to keep security," he said.

The Israeli army said it was checking the report.

Jenin was the first West Bank city to be transferred to the PLO since a September peace deal with Israel on extending Palestinian self-rule.

Under the accord Israel agreed to withdraw from another five Palestinian cities and parts of Hebron, a flash-point of violence where about 400 Jewish settlers live among 120,000 Palestinians, late in December.

Jihad activists held

Israel arrested 11 Islamic Jihad activists in the West Bank ahead of continuing army redeployment from the area, Palestinian sources said on Saturday.

They said the arrests took place in villages that remain under Israeli security control near Palestinian-ruled Jenin on Friday night.

Israel has already handed over civilian responsibilities of several villages in the West

Hardliners fan revolt

(Continued from page 1)

President Milosevic has given us guarantees in writing that he'll make certain they do so," a White House spokeswoman, Mary Ellen Glynn, said.

A U.S. official who requested anonymity said differences between Mr. Karadzic and Mr. Milosevic were not surprising. "We have seen splits before between them. I am not surprised," the official said.

The Dayton accord calls for all of Sarajevo to be under Bosnian government control, which would force the Serbs to cede areas they control.

The plan for Sarajevo will be difficult to enforce. An estimated 120,000 Serbs live in suburbs such as Ilidza, Hadzici, Grbavica and

Vogusca which remained in Serb hands during the 3½ year war.

Although some are refugees, many have always lived there and reject the prospect of coming under government control.

Serb military and community leaders have begun to speak to Western reporters to pitch their feelings at world opinion and voice their bitterness against Milosevic.

"Our own team has betrayed us, (Milosevic) did only what he needed to get sanctions lifted," a student in Ilidza complained.

An army officer said the world had been too anxious to portray the issues in Bosnia in terms of good and bad and added: "We are the victims of American-style journalism. When they don't understand or it's too complicated, they make it simple."

Hrawi comments on Israeli occupation

(Continued from page 1)

Lebanese officials have said Syria, which has 35,000 troops in Lebanon, chose to stick with Mr. Hrawi whom it sees as an ally because it faces regional problems and stalled talks with Israel.

Both Beirut and Damascus, whose four-year-old

peace negotiations with Israel are stalled over the question of an Israeli withdrawal from South Lebanon and the Golan, say the guerrillas have every right to resist the Israeli occupation.

"To all who demand we stop the resistance I say... is resistance allowed for you but not in Lebanon?" Mr. Hrawi asked.

Rights groups condemn verdict

(Continued from page 12)

Both groups called on Mr. Mubarak not to ratify the sentences against the Brothers and to stop military trials of civilians.

Twenty-seven members of the Brotherhood acquitted by the court have still not been released two days after their trial ended, legal sources said.

The sources said the acquitted Brotherhood members had been expected to be released on Saturday, but the order was not implemented.

They can be legally kept in detention until President Mubarak ratifies the court's rulings, which he can take up to two weeks, the sources said.

The court also ruled that the unofficial headquarters of the Brotherhood be closed.

This ruling was carried out within hours of its pronouncement as police immediately sealed the offices and threw out their occu-

pants.

Before the ruling, Amnesty International called the defendants "prisoners of conscience."

The U.S. State Department said of the sentences against the Brotherhood: "We believe it's important to respect human rights and fight terrorism within the rule of law. That said, we recognise the responsibility and the right of all governments to assure the safety and well being of their citizens and to maintain civic order."

A U.S. official said later that "the real problem here is, of course, their use of military courts to do this."

The official said "there is a debate about whether or not, strictly speaking, military courts are the right courts for them to use in this situation... this is an issue that we've raised with the Egyptians... their use of military courts to try and convict those suspected of terrorist acts."



Saudi police at the site of the recent explosion that killed six people

Saudi Arabia attractive enigma for Western expats

By Mariam Isa Reuter

RIYADH — The powerful car bomb which killed seven foreigners in Riyadh last week shattered the myth that Saudi Arabia was immune to the political violence that has shaken other Middle Eastern countries.

But many Western expatriates addicted to the lavish benefits of life in the conservative desert kingdom — handsome salaries, swimming pools, tennis courts and discotheques within huge compounds — are in no hurry to leave.

Americans living in compounds near the U.S.-run military centre ravaged by the explosion were traumatised by the tragedy, in which five Americans and two Indians were killed and more than 60 people wounded.

Security has been stepped up and the U.S. embassy has warned its citizens to keep a

low profile.

But other expatriates in the capital and Americans based elsewhere in Saudi Arabia appear to have taken the violence in their stride.

No-one seems willing to relinquish lucrative employment in the oil-rich country's private sector.

"The bomb didn't worry me — I don't feel under any threat," said American Richard Field, a Riyadh-based marketing executive with Wellcare Holdings of Paris.

"I was two blocks from the World Trade Centre in New York when that bomb went off and I was there... It sort of puts things in perspective," he said.

U.S. military personnel contracted to train Saudi forces feel particularly vulnerable because threats from a little-known group, the Islamic Movement for Change, singled them out as

targets.

But many of the five million foreigners living in Saudi Arabia share the official Saudi view that the attack would not be repeated.

"I'm not particularly bothered," said Sarah Wilcox, a 30-year-old British housewife with two small children from Derbyshire.

Ms. Wilcox, whose husband works for Saudi Airlines, said she felt the event had no impact on her life because she lives far from Riyadh in the west coast city of Jeddah.

Marianne Knezevic, a 25-year-old ex-model who has just joined her husband in Riyadh as a health instructor for the children of a Saudi prince, was also unperturbed.

Like many other Western expatriates, she is drawn by the leisurely, albeit secluded way of life offered by the best of Islam's two holiest shrines.

"I like it here — there are restrictions but there's a lot

less rush than in the United States," she told Reuters.

Knezevic, who has shared a fashion catwalk with British supermodel Kate Moss, said she did not mind donning the abaya, the all-enveloping black cloak which Saudi women wear in public.

"It gives you a sense of mystery, which is what women like... anyway, it's boring to walk around half-naked," she said.

Although women cannot drive or even venture out alone to public, foreigners lead very different lives within the walls of their segregated compounds. Swimming pools, tennis courts, bowling alleys and small cinemas provide daytime recreation while in the evenings, there are parties and discotheques.

"There is so much going on — campouts, desert barbecues and parties in all-male compounds — you are very much in demand here as a single woman," Ellen

Smith, a 25-year-old nurse from Centre Queensland, Australia said.

"I love the desert and I have a great social life — I was out every night when I arrived 14 months ago," Mr. Smith, who works in King Faisal Hospital in Riyadh, said.

Lilly Graham, 61, said she would miss 19 years of life in Saudi Arabia when her husband, who works for British Aerospace in the southwestern town of Khamis Mesbait, redies.

"It's a wonderful life — lots of sports, and people do things they wouldn't do at home, like drop in without warnings. Relationships are much closer here because you're all in the same boat," she said.

Mr. Graham said her favourite weekend pastime was jumping into a car with a group of friends, driving to the beach and sleeping under

the stars after a day of snorkelling on the reef.

"Where else in the world could you do this without being afraid of being mugged or robbed?" she said.

Crime is virtually unknown in Saudi Arabia because of stiff Islamic penalties, including hand amputation for theft and beheading for murder or adultery.

But Mr. Graham voiced the feeling of many expatriates when she said that ultimately, it was the petty restrictions which made Saudi Arabia a place she would be glad to leave.

"Not being able to drive is number one. The constant fear of being 'mugged,' (stopped by one of the kingdom's voluntary religious police) is another," she said.

"Saudi Arabia has been good to us but I've had enough. They need us here but they don't want us," she said.

EU, U.S. turn trans-Atlantic courtship into marriage

By Jeremy Lovell Reuter

BRUSSELS — The European Union (EU) and the United States are aiming to turn their cold war courtship into a marriage of equals when they publish their plans for the future at their summit meeting in Madrid on Dec. 3.

The summit will launch a political declaration, called "the New Trans-Atlantic Agenda," and a 21-page joint action plan ranging from security to humanitarian aid, disease, the environment, terrorism, drugs, world trade and even an EU-U.S. literature prize.

"This amounts to a really historic step forward on the non-military side to building a true U.S.-EU partnership for the post-cold war era," Stuart Zizenstat, U.S. ambassador to the EU told Reuters.

"It is moving a relationship which is largely consultative... to a joint action relationship," he said in an interview.

The project, strongly attacked by a France fearful that its leading role in Europe could be undermined, was borne out of a feeling that the trans-Atlantic relationship was heading for the rocks as the cold war came apart under a series of trade disputes and animosity over lack of direct U.S. participation in Bosnia.

"The reason for the breadth of the document is to illustrate how broadly we do co-operate," Mr. Zizenstat said. "This should belie any perception that the United States will be any less engaged in Europe we were in the cold war."

The Madrid Declaration will note the strategic global role that EU-U.S. cooperation has played in the past, and pledge to build on it in the future.

"Today we face new challenges at home and abroad. To meet them, we must further strengthen and adapt the partnership that has

served us so well," says a draft text approved by EU foreign ministers on Nov. 20.

"Domestic challenges are not an excuse to turn inward we can learn from each other's experiences and build new trans-Atlantic bridges," it adds.

The declaration pledges to keep the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) at the heart of trans-Atlantic security at the same time as strengthening the EU's own defence mechanisms and the organisation for security and cooperation in Europe.

It vows cooperation on promoting peace and democracy throughout the world, joint action on fighting international crime, drug trafficking, terrorism, refugee problems, damage to the environment and the spread of infectious diseases such as malaria, AIDS and the Ebola virus.

International crime — or what has been termed drugs and thugs — proved to be one of the trickier parts of the declaration to agree because it impinges on the EU's own efforts to boost its fledgling justice and home affairs arm.

Nevertheless, the document does include the so-called "no place to hide" principle on extradition procedures and asset seizure.

It also agrees to exchange information on new technologies being used by criminals and police forces alike, and to the joint training of central European law enforcement officials.

With more than half an eye on the Dec. 1996 ministerial meeting in Singapore of the World Trade Organisation (WTO), it pledges to bolster the world trading system.

It also, against strong resistance from France, pledges to carry out a joint study into possibilities of further reducing or even eliminating trans-Atlantic trade barriers with the aim of creating what some have dubbed a trans-Atlantic marketplace.

The actual title has yet to be agreed but EU diplomats

have said that Germany took offence at the term "marketplace" because it has a similar ring to "market garden," which was the code name for the abortive allied attempt to capture the strategic Dutch town of Arnhem during World War II.

With the Internet and information technology generally growing at breakneck pace, the action plan promises to create a trans-Atlantic information technology agreement including reduced tariffs on all electronic and computer products that are part of the "info tech" revolution, and developing integrated systems.

The declaration singles out the former-Communist states of East and Central Europe, Russia, Ukraine and Turkey as warranting special help in building democracy.

It also pledges to support the Middle East peace process, in particular efforts to achieve accords between Israel, Lebanon and Syria.

Mr. Zizenstat said the U.S. position went even further than the declaration in that Washington had an end goal of creating a free trade area with the Palestinian autonomous territories.

"For the last 50 years, the trans-Atlantic relationship has been central to the security and prosperity of our people. Our aspirations for the future must match our achievements in the past," the declaration concludes.

There have been some criticisms that the very scope of the declaration and action plan constitute its weakness for the simple reason that there is something in it for virtually everyone.

This desire to please, they argue, is due to political weakness on both sides of the Atlantic — a point that Mr. Zizenstat disputes.

"This document is not based on political weakness and it can transcend political changes," he said. "It is a living document that can be updated as new conditions arise."



Angry South Korean women carrying portraits of President Kim Young-Sam to honour a promise to punish the 'key masterminds' of the 1980 Kwangju massacre, march through the streets of Seoul on Saturday. They are calling 1,000 were wounded (AFP photo)

Turkey urges Iraq-Kurd talks

(Continued from page 12)

Kuwait.

The head of UNSCOM has justified his visit to some capitals of the Gulf states as "diplomatic, meant to intimidate and blackmail (Iraq)."

U.N. arms inspectors say they need more time to probe latest arms revelations by Iraq following the August defection of two key government figures to Jordan.

It was the third attack on Mr. Ekeus in the Iraqi press in less than a week. The ruling Baath Party newspaper Al Thawra said on Friday Mr. Ekeus bowed to pressure from the United States and other regional powers.

Babel newspaper, owned by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday, said on Wednesday Mr. Ekeus' visit to the Gulf proved that he was politically and financially bankrupt.

In a report last month, Mr. Ekeus complained that Iraq had gravely misled his inspectors, and demanded further

data on the country's past weapons programmes.

Al Iraq newspaper slammed the remarks as "dubious, meant to intimidate and blackmail (Iraq)."

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Wedding row over hand-holding

(Continued from page 12)

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ASSFUT (R) — Two men

(Continued from page 12)

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Kuwait bourse launches computerised trading

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait launched the Gulf's first computerised stock trading Saturday with brokers discarding binoculars and market boards in favour of computer screens and mouse commands.

Scores of curious investors in Arab robes gathered at the exchange to witness a reform aimed at bringing the Gulf's most buoyant equity market up to international standards. "For a first day this is perfect," said Mireille Al Hakeem, a computer expert helping to train dealers on the bilingual Arabic-English Kuwait automated trading system (KATS).

"Some of these people have never used a computer before, but they have showed a big interest in learning," she said. "At times 15 people

used to show up at a course designed for 12." Seventy-six contracts were conducted within the first 30 minutes of the two hour 20 minute session, more than a 10th of the daily average under the old system.

KATS, replacing a paper-based manual system used since 1983, allows brokerage firms to match volume and prices instantly. It publishes the deal within seconds.

The idea is to improve competitiveness, fairness and confidentiality, thereby boosting transaction volume, and to hasten the day when international investors may trade directly.

Only nationals of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) of the United Arab Emirates, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait,

Bahrain and Saudi Arabia may trade directly in listed concerns. Non-GCC foreigners may participate indirectly through two listed mutual funds.

"This is a historic day," said Saleh Al Salmi, local share manager at Kuwait International Investment Company. "Trade will conform to exchange rules based on the principle of auction."

The exchange this year has been the Gulf's most buoyant, with the price index rising a third and volume up fivefold.

Trade has been helped by privatisation and relaxation of repayment terms for some listed companies with had debt.

Market capitalisation of the 50 listed concerns is about 3.9 billion dinars (\$13 bil-

lion), up 20 per cent from a year ago.

Under the old system dealers conducted business around a marker board in the middle of the trading hall and investors watched the action through binoculars from a first floor balcony.

Thirty or so dealers used the board to obtain price quotes and then negotiated the quantity verbally with each other.

Under the new system the dealers sit at stalls and cubicles set up by brokerage firms around the edge of the hall and use their own trading screens to conduct business.

Investors now sit in what was the trading floor and watch price quotations, volume movements and company financial data on non-trading computer screens.

When they want to buy or sell they go to the brokerage stalls and place an order.

The result is a much busier and noisier atmosphere. On Saturday scores of investors huddled around screens sipping coffee or tea, taking turns trying out the system or staring at huge electronic boards showing a real-time moving index.

Other investors were baffled by the new KATS procedures.

"When you play with cats (KATS) you should expect some scratches," joked one broker. "It will take time before we get used to the system."

The KATS system was designed by America's ATT Corp. with software provided by Austrian firm Effect Invest.

Sixteen mid-size countries affirm support for WTO

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (R) — Trade officials from 16 mid-size economies affirmed their support for the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the goal of further global trade liberalisation at a two-day meeting in Canada, officials said Friday.

"The two-day discussion... has demonstrated the profound commitment we share to the World Trade Organisation and the rules-based trading system," Canadian Trade Minister Roy McLaren said in a statement issued at the end of the talks.

Participating in the talks that ended Friday in Vancouver were trade ministers from Australia, Canada, Hong Kong, Hungary, Indonesia, Morocco, New Zealand, Norway, Singapore, South Africa and Thailand as

well as senior representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Mexico and Switzerland. Renato Ruggiero, director-general of the WTO, also attended.

The officials who participated "recognise that increased trade is essential to the realisation of (their domestic economic) goals," he added.

Canada called the session to prepare for the first meeting of trade ministers under the WTO next year in Singapore. The WTO began operation 11 months ago as the successor to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

The 16 countries looked at the rise of regional trading blocs and "agreed on the critical importance of ensuring these initiatives contribute to the strength of the

multilateral trading system," Mr. McLaren said.

The session in Vancouver was not intended to reach decisions but to share views on what needs to be done to implement existing trade commitments and identify new issues that should be discussed by the WTO, Mr. McLaren said.

Among the topics on the meeting's agenda were the need to help the least-developed countries gain better market access, preparation for the Singapore meeting and plans for further liberalisation in agriculture and services trade.

The officials discussed trade and labour standards but concluded that there was not a consensus for the issue to be discussed within the WTO, Mr. McLaren said.

Social strife continues in France

PARIS (AFP) — Social disruption continued Saturday to plague France, with trains running at a quarter of their normal service and calls for extending the action into next week.

A day after the latest national strike of public sector employees — the second in less than two months — railway workers' unions called for their strike to continue until Monday in several regions.

The CFDT, the FGAAC and the CGT called on members to continue to strike following Friday's day of action.

The CGT union said in a statement: "In most cases workers who are on duty will continue their strike action from this evening, while those scheduled to be on on Monday will take over from them."

"The most important thing is to develop our action with the widest possible solidarity," it said.

The CFDT, one of France's top three unions, urged its members "to continue the movement... to consolidate it in the widest possible union solidarity," referring to its executive committee's backing for an "unlimited strike."

The trade union Force Ouvriere (Workers' Force), which has strong representation in the public sector, also called for an "unlimited strike on Tuesday, a move that should unite it with the

SNCF represents 32 per cent of the drivers of the SNCF national rail authority, and for the 24 hours.

Nevertheless, SNCF man-



agement was hoping to offer five of its eight normally scheduled Eurostar trains between Paris and London on Saturday, having managed nine out of 12 Paris-London trains on Friday.

The general strike was called by six unions in protest at Mr. Juppe's social security reform plans announced in parliament last week. Workers are notably protesting plans to curb their pension rights as well as new taxes levied to help pay off the massive social security budget deficit.

Everything from government offices, postal and telephone services to state-run railways was hit by the strike, the second such nationwide action in barely a month. On Oct. 10 some 57 per cent of civil servants stayed away during a strike involving five million workers.

Public Affairs Minister Dominique Perben said only 27 per cent of workers supported Friday's strike. The CGT union said one million demonstrators took to the streets in demonstrations throughout France, while police estimated crowds of around 400,000.

French public sector workers, striking over the conservative government's plans to reform France's troubled welfare system, take to the streets of Paris Friday. Banner reads: For Our Retirement, Our Welfare, Our Salaries and Employment — Public sector workers" (Reuters photo)

THE BETTER HALF

By Glasbergen

If I was an octopus, I'd have 8 arms to hug you with!

More likely you'd be watching TV with 8 remote controls!

Wall Street breaks 5,000 barrier for first time

NEW YORK (AFP) — Share prices on Wall Street slipped over the 5,000 barrier several times before closing above 5,000 for the first time this past week, just nine months after breaking the 4,000-point mark.

The Dow Jones index of 30 blue chips closed Friday at 5,048.84, up 58.89 points (1.18 per cent). The record was the 62nd in a single year, the most for any year since the exchange opened in 1896.

The rise was part of a Wall Street tradition of a sharp rise in share prices during Thanksgiving week, the third week in November.

The radical restructuring of American industry that has

taken place in the past decade or so has revolutionised the economy and has also sent share prices soaring, said Mickey Levy, of Nationsbank Capital Markets.

U.S. companies have higher profits and dominate the world markets in computers and telecommunications. In addition, the end of the cold war has opened new markets for U.S. companies, which are well positioned to move in.

And the stock market is becoming increasingly popular with people who are planning their retirement, turning any downturn into an buying opportunity, said Chris

Forbes of the New York Stock Exchange.

Still, the Wall Street index could soon see a correction of two to four per cent in the coming week before share prices head upward to 5,200 to 5,300 in early 1996, said Peter Cardillo of Westfalia Investments.

But the index of 30 blue chips did not reflect share prices on the market as a whole last week, said Larry Watchel of Prudential Securities.

On the bond market, the interest rates on the benchmark 30-year Treasury bills was at 6.26 per cent Friday, up from 6.23 per cent the preceding week.

THE Daily Crossword by Fran Ragus

ACROSS

- Like tame horses
- Guide
- Speak wildly
- Strive on even terms
- Came up
- Joran or Gray of TV
- Gunnies
- Melodies
- Surrealist
- Households
- Stole a quick glance
- Regrets
- Square
- Arthur's
- soothsayer
- Galahad's father
- Shallot kin
- Booby sac
- Spring mo.
- Winter mo.
- Good tidings
- 102
- Unrefined mineral
- Brink
- Goddess of peace
- Retinues
- Degraded
- Ticks off
- Touch
- Identification band
- Model of perfection
- Rhythm
- Musical key
- Compliant
- Tutelage
- Tinge
- Tip
- Hastened
- Let up
- Big top

DOWN

- Con game
- Dinky place
- Ready
- Yvonne of films
- Shiny fabric
- Bind
- Long time
- Comp. pt.
- Reaction
- Cheap whiskey
- Don't give —
- Despicable
- Sir Geraint's wife
- Arthur's lair lady
- Arthur's weapon
- Cleopatra's conveyance
- American Indian
- January in Avila
- Potato gadget
- Respiratory organs
- Spikes
- Suppose
- Proven
- Reveals
- like a couch potato
- Drum roll
- Jevised
- Subsided
- Swiftly
- Rudiments
- Gather
- Barryard mother
- Stare with open mouth
- Augury
- Following
- Monk
- Vegas

Peanuts

Andy Capp

Mutt'n'Jeff

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1995

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Make those plans with the one you love today which can make the relationship more spruced up and sparkling. Be careful while driving on the highway.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) You get fine ideas today for making your life more interesting and profitable, and also gain your personal wishes for being prosperous.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be with your mate and friends at this time and seek new activities which are mutually pleasurable and can give you further knowledge.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Get regular duties handled more efficiently at this time and you can impress a high favourably. Enjoy a fine family dinner with your loved ones.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You can expand your relationship with mate so that more benefits can be enjoyed by both. An interesting invitation comes your way.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Do something practical at home to clear up that difficult situation there. Solve all difficulties which come up wisely and with great tact.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Some unexpected and strange call to handle some outside matter today will bring greater accord with a fellow associate you come in contact.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You may receive some payments for services rendered later today, so be on the alert for it. Improve your home surroundings.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You are inspired just how to make your unusual talent pay off. Somely today, and those around you as well.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A situation concerning a family member has to be handled quietly and conscientiously today. Let this be confidential, also.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) A talk with an unusual person can reveal at this time how to make your life more exciting and profitable in the days ahead.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Any financial ideas should be discussed with an expert today who is modern thinking and wise. Don't be stingy with a friend.

Birthstone of November: Topaz — Tiger's Eye



Former Barings financial trader Nick Leeson (left) is led out of the Commercial Affairs Department (CAD) Friday on his way to Singapore's Subordinate Court where he was formally charged with 11 counts of forgery and cheating. If found guilty Leeson could face up to 14 years in jail (AFP photo)

How to lose \$1b?

SINGAPORE (R) — The formal charging of Nick Leeson Friday over the collapse of Barings Bank still leaves a question unanswered — just how can a 28-year-old lose more than \$1 billion.

Losing such a fortune is not all that difficult in the complex world of high finance, as the Briton discovered when he gambled and lost bets on movements in the Japanese stock market.

"None of this is real money," Leeson told British journalist David Frost in a jailhouse interview from Germany in September.

He is charged in Singapore, where he ran up the colossal losses, of forging letters, pasting together portions of documents and doctoring trading reports to cover them up.

Now in a Singapore prison, Leeson is expected to help the authorities understand just how he managed to use and lose more than \$1 billion of Barings' money in his futures trading.

According to an official Singapore report on the Barings debacle, the one-time whiz-kid traded mostly in Nikkei 225 futures and options and Japanese government bond (JGB) futures.

Futures such as JGBs are known as derivatives because they depend on the existence of an actual bond and are often used as a means of hedging a trader's bet.

For instance, someone might sell a bond believing the market would go down. That person might then buy a bond future contract at a price that would balance any loss on the original sale if the market went up.

The Nikkei 225 is Tokyo's equivalent of the Dow Jones index in New York or London's Financial Times index, which give overall indications of how the stock market is doing.

Leeson traded in Nikkei futures contracts — basically gambling on the level of the index on a given date — and Nikkei options, which give the right to buy or sell a contract but does not obligate a purchase.

Unlike currency, bond or gold futures, the Nikkei 225 contract has no underlying physical instrument — no bond, no bank notes, no gold bar.

"The Nikkei 225 is very volatile. You move fast and you move a lot," said one Singapore futures trader. "You're not going to hold these contracts until they expire. You want to get in and out as quickly as possible."

Leeson was originally told

to work as an arbitrage trader — seeking to exploit any price difference between Nikkei futures contracts in Osaka and Singapore by making split-second decisions to buy a contract in one city and sell in another.

But Leeson instead took a gamble, betting the Nikkei would stay relatively stable in late 1994 and early 1995 by selling options to other traders.

His strategy, which Barings officials in London allege was unauthorized, was shattered on Jan. 23, which sent the Nikkei 225 tumbling.

Heavy selling prompted traders to exercise options bought from Leeson. He then

had to buy contracts to fulfill the obligations and bought more in an attempt to recoup the money by effectively betting the market would rally. It kept falling.

In simple terms, Leeson bet a lot of money and lost.

Leeson needed funds to pay off his debt. The Singapore report alleged he manipulated Barings records to get cash from the bank's London headquarters.

Singapore alleges Leeson got about \$230 million from Barings accounts in Singapore and about \$900 million from London by inflating profits in Barings' Singapore computer system.

It says Leeson used a hid-

den trading account to absorb losses by putting fictitious trades into the computer system to cancel out losing positions. Barings' potential debt in Singapore thus seemed smaller than it actually was.

He is also accused of changing some trades to show larger profits, allowing him to withdraw more money.

When Leeson fled Singapore on Feb. 23, the bank had an astounding 96,000 pending contracts in Nikkei futures.

But his alleged manipulation of the records showed Barings had only about 20,000, representing a \$400 million shortfall that snowballed and hurt the bank.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET			
AMMAN STOCK EXCHANGE - AMMAN - JORDAN			
UNLISTED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 25/11/1995			
COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES	VALUATION	PRICE
BANKS SECTOR			
ARAB BANK PSC	243	2,132	2,132
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK	10,000	2,132	2,132
UNION BANK PSC	10,000	2,132	2,132
JORDAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	10,000	2,132	2,132
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Jordan leads Bulls past Jazz

SALT LAKE CITY (R) — Michael Jordan scored 15 of his 34 points in the fourth quarter, including eight points in a late 9-0 run, as the Chicago Bulls defeated the Utah Jazz 90-85 on Friday.

Chicago (10-1) has won the first three games of a seven-game road trip and five straight overall. Utah (10-3) had a six-game win streak halted and fell to 6-1 at home.

"We had to fight hard," Jordan said. "They went to the free throw line a lot and our big guys got into foul trouble quite a bit. But we did an adequate job trying to contain (Karl) Malone and it was just a battle down the stretch."

"We did some dumb things down the stretch and that's when you don't have a chance to win," Utah coach Jerry Sloan said. "The other thing was we missed a lot of free throws and I thought we did a very poor job of running the floor."

John Stockton scored 23 points and Malone 19 for the Jazz.

Jordan shot 9-of-21 from the field but made 14-of-17 from the line. Scottie Pippen added 22 points and had eight rebounds and Luc Laury had 10 points and 10 rebounds.

In Dallas, Jalen Rose tallied five of his seven points in overtime and Mahmoud Abdul-Rauf scored a career-high 39 points as the Denver Nuggets defeated the Mavericks 112-109.

Dallas's Jason Kidd scored four points in the final 12 seconds of the fourth quarter to send the game to overtime.

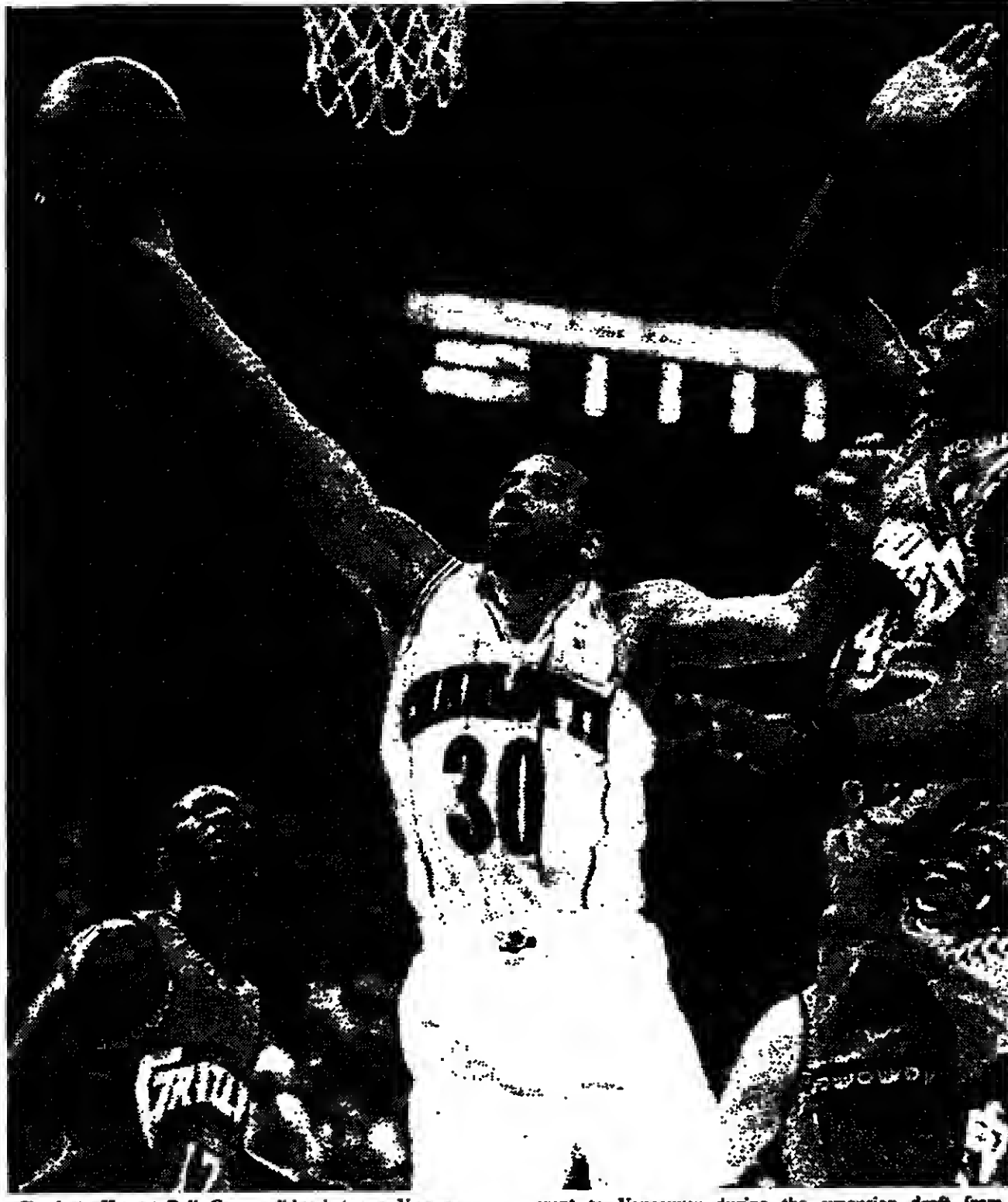
Jamal Mashburn had 37 points, six rebounds and nine assists for Dallas, which has dropped five straight. The Mavs' Jimmy Jackson left the game in the fourth quarter with the same left ankle injury that sidelined him last season.

In Seattle, Hersey Hawkins scored 27 points and Shawn Kemp had 25 points and 17 rebounds as the SuperSonics defeated the San Antonio Spurs 112-100.

Detlef Schrempf had 21 points and seven rebounds and Gary Payton, expected to be out for a few weeks with an injured foot, recorded 13 points and nine assists for Seattle.

Sean Elliott scored 33 points for San Antonio.

In Baltimore, Robert Pack contributed 21 points and six assists. George Muresan had 19 points and 15 rebounds and Juwan Howard added 18 points to power the Washington Bullets to a 110-94 victory over the Miami Heat.



Charlotte Hornets Dell Curry glides between Vancouver Grizzlies Chris King (left) and Kenny Gattison on Friday during NBA action, at the Charlotte Coliseum. Gattison

Alonzo Mourning had 24 points and eight rebounds and Billy Owens 22 points for Miami, whose three-game win streak ended.

Washington rookie Rasheed Wallace left in the second quarter with an ankle injury.

In Boston, Ron Seikaly had 23 points and 10 rebounds and Tim Hardaway added 18 points and seven assists as the Golden State Warriors beat the Celtics 101-94.

Golden State got its first win in six road games. The Warriors' win was just their third in 18 games at Boston dating back to the 1978-79 season and first in five trips.

Rick Fox scored 21 points for Boston. In Charlotte, Glen Rice and Larry Johnson each scored 20 points as the Hornets stopped their five-game losing streak with a 116-104 victory over the Vancouver Grizzlies.

Benoit Benjamin scored 18

points for Vancouver, which lost its 10th straight after opening their season with two wins.

At Detroit, Allan Houston scored 23 points and Grant Hill 20 as the Pistons routed the Philadelphia 76ers 101-78.

Detroit snapped a three-game losing streak. The Sixers, led by Jerry Stackhouse's 20 points, have lost six consecutive games.

At Indiana, Terrell Brandon had 24 points and Chris Mills 22 to lead the Cleveland Cavaliers past the Pacers 100-93.

Reggie Miller had 27 points, including 15 in the fourth quarter, but was 3-of-11 from three-point range for Indiana. At Minnesota, Nick Anderson scored a season-high 34 points to lead the Orlando Magic past the Timberwolves, 109-98. Penny Hardaway added 22 points, a season-high 12 assists and seven rebounds.

went to Vancouver during the expansion draft from Charlotte (Reuters photo)

The win was the third in a row and ninth in 10 games for Orlando (10-2). The loss was the seventh straight for the Timberwolves (1-9), who got 29 points each from Tom Gugliotta and Isaiah Rider.

At Los Angeles, Brian Grant scored 10 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter and Mitch Richmond added a three-pointer with 64 seconds left in the game to lift the Sacramento Kings past the Lakers 99-98.

Richmond finished with 17

points and Tyus Eddy recorded a season-high 17 points for Sacramento, which rallied from a 16-point half-time deficit.

Cedric Ceballos led the Lakers with 23 points and 11 rebounds. In Portland, Clifford Robinson scored 23 points and Aaron McKie 18 as the Trail Blazers defeated the New Jersey Nets 99-87 for their third straight win.

The Nets fell to 0-7 on the road this season.

RESULTS

Charlotte	116	Vancouver	104
Detroit	101	Philadelphia	78
Cleveland	100	Indiana	93
Washington	110	Miami	94
Golden State	101	Boston	94
Orlando	109	Minnesota	98
Chicago	90	Utah	85
Denver	112	Dallas	109(OT)
Portland	99	New Jersey	87
Seattle	112	San Antonio	100
Sacramento	99	La Lakers	98

Graf to clear Steffi

BONN (AFP) — Peter Graf will clear his daughter Steffi of any blame in alleged massive tax evasion, the weekly magazine Focus says in its Monday edition.

Focus says Peter Graf will tell Mannheim prosecutors investigating the tax fraud that he assumes all responsibility.

His lawyers, Steffen Ufer and Kurt Himmelsbach, believe the statement will bring to an end all proceedings against the world number one tennis star.

Peter, detained since August, will explain in detail all movements of his daughter's earnings and exactly what sums she was paid, the magazine says.

Graf is alleged to have paid only 10 million marks (\$7 million) in tax on earnings of 180 million marks (\$120 million) since turning professional in 1982.

Peter Graf was arrested on Aug. 2 and Joachim Eckhardt, a financial consultant, has been detained since September 26. Graf himself has twice been interviewed by an examining magistrate.

German newspapers on Saturday claimed Peter Graf, who they say helped himself to 40 per cent of his daughter's income, used a Dutch front company to avoid paying 44 million marks (\$31.4 million dollars) in tax from sponsorship earnings.

Top-seeded doubles team fails to reach final

EINDHOVEN (R) — Top-seeded Australian duo Todd Woodbridge and Mark Woodforde crashed out of the ATP World Doubles Championship semifinals on Saturday when they lost in straight sets to Grant Connell and Pat Galbraith.

The Canadian-U.S. number three seeds won 7-6, 6-3, showing perfect form and brilliant play at the net, while Woodforde was well below par, losing his service three times.

This will be the first time in four years the final will not feature the Woodbridge-Woodforde combination, champions in 1992.

They took the first set to a tie-break which Connell and Galbraith won 7-5.

The second set started with three service breaks, the Australians losing twice. Woodforde lost his service again in the ninth game, giving the match to the Canadian-U.S. pair.

In Sunday's final, Connell and Galbraith face Dutch pair Jacco Eltingh and Paul Haarhuis, who beat fifth-seeded Cyril Suk and Damir Vacek of the Czech Republic 6-3, 6-2 in their semifinal.

Champions in 1993, the Dutch number two seeds made few mistakes in front of their home crowd.

Vacek's serve was broken in the sixth game of the first set and again in the first of the second set. Suk was broken in the seventh, despite a good first serve for most of the match.

Haarhuis decided the match with an ace, after he dropped from 40-0 to duce.

Tomba not happy with course conditions

PARK CITY, Utah (R) — Alberto Tomba awoke with a stiff neck on Friday, but reserved his major complaint for a race course increasingly assaulted by warm weather on the eve of a World Cup giant slalom.

The defending World Cup champion arrived from the previous race site at Beaver Creek, Colorado, Thursday night and made his first inspection Friday morning of a Park City track that consists of a ribbon of white on a tapestry of brown.

The racing snow is deep enough, but continued warm weather that comes with a continuing drought has caused severe problems for race organizers fighting to keep the surface hard.

"The chemicals they applied to the snow made the snow uneven. There are bumps here and there," Tomba said.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Officials face 'negligent killing' charges

MUNICH (R) — Munich prosecutors unexpectedly announced on Friday that they were pressing charges against two top skiing officials over the death of Austrian Ulrich Maier in a World Cup downhill in Germany in January 1994. The surprise move came after prosecutors closed their original inquiry in October last year, finding there was no negligence on the part of the organizers.

Former world champion Maier broke her neck in a high-speed crash at Garmisch-Partenkirchen. On the charge sheet, International Skiing Federation (FIS) race directors Kurt Hoch of Austria and Jan Tschann of Switzerland were accused of negligent killing. They were alleged to have failed to observe safety regulations in placing a timing post at the place where Maier crashed.

Aamodt begins rehabilitation of knee

PARK CITY, Utah (R) — Norwegian Kjetil Aamodt, who chipped a bone in his knee earlier this week, had successful surgery on Thursday and has begun rehabilitation, his coach said on Friday. "The operation went well, but he will be out four weeks," said Philip Gartner, head coach of the Norwegian World Cup ski team. Gartner said Kjetil injured his right knee in his fourth training run at Beaver Creek, Colorado, on Wednesday. Kjetil was the overall men's champion two seasons ago and is a former Olympic and world champion.

Blackburn discipline players

BLACKBURN (R) — Blackburn Rovers said on Friday they had disciplined England internationals Graeme Le Saux and David Batty for fighting in their European Champions' League midweek match against Spartak Moscow. But Rovers did not disclose the nature of the punishment, although it was believed to be heavy fines for the pair. Full-back Le Saux, who clashed with midfielder Batty after they collided going for a ball near the left touchline in the fourth minute of their 3-0 Group B defeat, has accepted the punishment and made an apology.

Turk Passer withdraws from Japan Cup

TOKYO (AFP) — Turk Passer has been withdrawn from the four million dollar Japan Cup after injuring a ligament in its left foreleg, the Japan Racing Association said Saturday. The five-year-old American gelding was to start with John Velazquez in the saddle in the 2,400-metre (1.5 mile) race at Tokyo Race Course on Sunday, vying for the 1.72 million dollar first prize. "I am very disappointed that we are unable to participate. But I must first consider what's best for the horse. I do not want to put Turk Passer's career at risk," said trainer Flint Schulhofer. "He will recover in time, and I hope to continue on with Turk Passer to enable us to be invited again to the Japan Cup next year," he added.

Hamburg jump to 4th

BONN (R) — Revitalised Hamburg needed a 40th minute penalty to clinch a 1-0 win over city rivals St. Pauli and move up one place to fourth in the German Bundesliga on Friday. Dieter Spoor stroked home the penalty after midfielder Uwe Jachnig had been fouled, continuing Hamburg's run of form since World Cup legend Uwe Seeler took over as chairman and brought in former international midfielder Felix Magath as coach. VfB Stuttgart's Brazilian striker Giovane Elber scored his 12th goal of the season to help his side to a 2-1 win at Fortuna Dusseldorf. The victory took Stuttgart into sixth place.

Lake Louise events postponed

LAKE LOUISE (AFP) — Both the women's World Cup skiing events here this weekend have been postponed for a day because of poor weather conditions, the organisers said Friday. The venue, which was to host a giant slalom on Saturday and a slalom on Sunday, has been hit by a combination of heavy snowfalls overnight and relatively warm daytime temperatures. The giant slalom, the first of the season, is now scheduled for Sunday and the slalom for Monday.

Browns in Cleveland for now

CLEVELAND (R) — A state court judge said on Friday the Cleveland Browns cannot move to Baltimore until questions about the team's lease in Cleveland are heard in court. Whether the move will actually be delayed depends on when a trial is held on the matter. A trial date has not been set. Browns majority owner Art Modell, who has owned the team since 1961, said earlier this month he will move the National Football League team to Baltimore for the 1996 season. The city of Cleveland sued the team in state court, saying the Browns must continue to play at Cleveland stadium, until the team's lease expires after the 1988 season. After a three-day hearing, Judge Kenneth Callahan granted a preliminary injunction on Friday.

Fukuda first Japanese top scorer

TOKYO (AFP) — Masahiro Fukuda converted a penalty for his 32nd goal of the season on Saturday to become the first Japanese to lead the goal scorers' list since the J-League was inaugurated in 1993. He scored one goal more than Italian striker Toto Schillaci as the Japanese football league second stage ended. Fukuda's 75th minute goal contributed to Urawa Red Diamonds 2-1 victory over Yokohama Flügels. Schillaci's teammates at Jubilo Iwata scored a 2-1 victory over Nagoya Grampus Eight. The 1990 World Cup top scorer left for home last week with an injury to his right foot. Verdy Kawasaki finished the second stage with a third straight defeat at the hands of Bellmare Hiratsuka who won 2-1 when Tetsuya Takada fired home an angled right-footer.

World Weightlifting

China makes breakthrough

GUANGZHOU, China (Agencies) — Igor Razarenov of Ukraine stepped in for absent teammate Timur Taimazov to win the men's 108kg category here Saturday at the World Weightlifting Championships.

Cui Wenhua of China, gold medalist in the snatch and silver total medalist, became the first Chinese man to win medals in a weight class higher than 100kg.

Razarenov, a friend and training partner of Taimazov, who set three world records sweeping the world championships last year in Istanbul, won gold medals here in both the jerk and total and a silver medal in the snatch.

Taimazov, who has an injured wrist, is also reportedly negotiating a deal to compete for Turkey, which would require Turkey to pay Ukraine a hefty transfer fee.

Razarenov snatched 190kg and jerked 227.5kg on his second attempt for a total of 417.5kg, well off Taimazov's world record of 435kg.

"My dream has come true," he said after the competition. Cui, 21, one of the highest competitors in the field, lifted 192.5kg to take the gold snatch medal, slipped to fifth in the jerk with a lift of 215kg, but won the silver total medal with a combined lift of 407.5kg.

"You could say Cui's success is a great breakthrough," said Chinese men's coach Xi Hanxiang.

"He has set an example of how Chinese male lifters can achieve success in the bigger weight categories."

"In weightlifting, we used to think only short people could win. Now we must concentrate on other selection criterion."

Russian Sergei Flerko took the bronze total medal, lifting 222.5kg to win the jerk silver.

Mukhran Gogia of Georgia won the snatch bronze and Gennady Schekalo of Belarus took the bronze jerk medal.

TV crew spill urine test sample

A U.S. television crew spilled the urine sample of a top Chinese woman competitor while filming in the doping control room at the World Weightlifting Championships, tournament officials said on Friday.

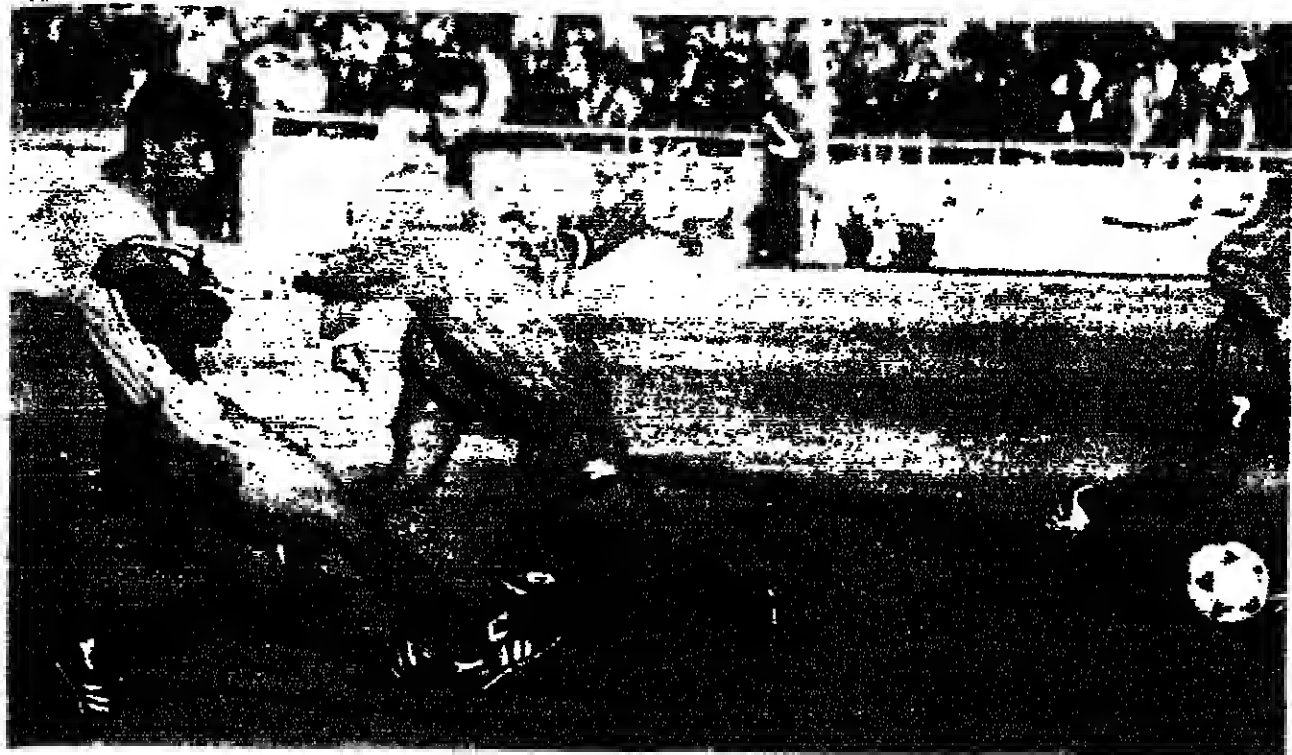
"The cameraman spilled the urine of the weightlifter, but the weightlifter produced urine again. There was nothing illegal about this," Tamas Ajan, International Weightlifting Federation (IWF) secretary general, said at a news conference.

Eyewitnesses said a Chinese women's team coach rushed out of the doping control room on Thursday, complaining that a cameraman for American Broadcasting Corp (ABC) had upset the urine sample of Li Yan, women's 76-kg category gold medalist.

Ajan said he could not confirm the sample was Li's. The incident sparked queries about possible complications with the testing procedures in Guangzhou and infuriated other television crews denied access to the doping control room.



China's Chen Xiaomin makes an attempt to break the women's world record in the 59kg class during the World Weightlifting Championships in China (AFP photo)



Iraqi Mu'ed Jufri (left) forces his way through Iran's defence during the Iranian Bahman-Iraqi Al Talaba match

counting for the Asian Soccer Clubs Cup competition in Baghdad. The match ended in a 1-1 (AFP photo)

Iraqi team wins nail-biting match with Iran

BAGHDAD (IR) — The two team managers swapped copies of the Koran before the match, 60,000 fans squeezed into the stadium and the streets of Baghdad were all but deserted for the first major soccer match between Iraq and Iran for 20 years.

Iraq's Talaba beat Iran's Bahman club 2-1 on aggregate in the Asian Football Club Championship on Friday. More than 60,000 people crammed Baghdad's stadium, built for 40,000 raising flags, beating drums, dancing, chanting, and clapping non-stop for two hours.

Talaba had originally beaten Bahman in Iran 1-0 on November 10 in the first leg.

The Iranians struck back

on Friday, when Bahman's Mohammed Khakburi scored in the 63rd minute to finish 1-0 up at the end of 90 minutes, forcing extra time because both teams were equal in the overall contest.

But in the third minute of extra time, Talaba's Qasbi Jatheer scored to win a place in the next round for the Iraqis.

Uday, eldest son of President Saddam Hussein, who heads Iraq's National Olympic Committee, rushed to embrace the players. Wearing a black leather jacket, the bearded Uday clapped as he elbowed his way through the cheering crowd.

Talaba's coach Ayoub Audisho, hailed by spectators as a hero, was carried on shoulders and saluted by Uday for the triumph.

Iraq, starved of international contact since United Nations sanctions were imposed after it invaded Kuwait in 1990, had waited the match with keen anticipation.

The match also had an extra edge because it was the first teams had played in Iraq since ending a 1980-88 war that killed up to a million men on both sides.

The Iranians wept bitterly as they lost. Some squatted on the ground covering their faces with their hands.

State radio and television interrupted programmes to broadcast national anthems. "This is how the embargoed people play," hurred

loudspeakers in Baghdad streets.

"If for them was a match, for us it was a fight," a choir on the state radio sang.

Baghdad streets were almost deserted when the match started.

Members of the Iranian embassy, had whooped and clapped in the stands, buoyed by Khakburi's goal until Jatheer's equaliser silenced them.

Talaba's triumph brought some compensation to soccer crazy Iraqis for the defeat of their Zawra Club by Qatar's Al-Arabi.

The official press had carried articles practically all week analysing the reasons behind Zawra's defeat in Qatar.

Arab Clubs Soccer Championship

Wihdat leave for S. Arabia today

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Kingdom's soccer champions Al Wihdat Sunday leave for the Saudi capital to take part in the 11th Arab Clubs Soccer Championship which will be hosted by Al Nasr Club of Riyadh Nov. 30-Dec. 12.

Al Wihdat, one of the most successful Jordanian soccer teams and the title-holders of the 1994 Premier League title will be playing in Group A alongside Algeria's Bluzdad, Kuwait's Kuthma, Yemen's Al Wihdeh and hosts Al Nasr.

Group B includes Al Hilal of Saudi Arabia, Tunisia's Al Taraji, Bahrain's Rifa Maghrebi, Sudan's Al Hilal and Palestine's Jabal Al Mukahber. The Palestinian team was a late replacement in the group after Syria's Al Horreih announced their withdrawal.

Only the top two teams



Al Wihdat's team with the 1994 Premier League trophy (file photo)

in each group will advance to the semifinal round.

Al Wihdat's delegation is headed by club chairman Bahjat Shihab and includes 22 players: Yousef Al Ammouri, Naser Ghanadour, Jihad Abdul Mune'm, Isam Mahmoud, Abdallah Abu Zame'h, Faisal Ibrahim, Samir Bahlouz, Sufyan Abdullah, Jamal Mahmoud, Munir Abu Hantash, Marwan Al Shamali, Khaled Al Majdawi, Othman Barhoumeh,

Adnan Al Tawil, Walid Mikha'il, Ra'fat Ali, Yaser Abu Johar, Mohammad Affif, Shahr Hamdan and Hisham Abdul Mune'm.

The competition was supposed to start Wednesday Nov. 29 but the Asian Soccer Federation asked Al

Nasr club to host the Asian Clubs Championship Nov. 24-28 (see separate story below)

The four competing clubs are Qatar's Al Arabi, Saipa of Iran, Turkmenistan's Kopetdag and hosts Al Nasr.

Schedule of Wihdat's matches
Saturday 2/12 Wihdat-bluzdad
Monday 4/12 Wihdat-Kuthma
Wednesday 6/12 Wihdat-Wihdeh
Friday 8/12 Wihdat-Nasr

Asian clubs championship

Saudi hosts on victory trail

RIYADH (AFP) — Substitute Fahd Al Huraifi scored an injury-time winner here on Friday to put host club Al Nasr on the road to the semifinals of the Asian club championship.

Al Nasr came trailing Al Arabi of Qatar 1-0 with only seven minutes left as the first round of the West Asia quarter-final league got underway.

But the Saudi club's Ghanaian import Ohene Kennedy headed an 83rd minute equaliser and then Al Huraifi collected a weak punch from Arabi keeper Ahmed Khalil and steered in the winner from the edge of the penalty area.

Al Huraifi, who had failed to start the match through injury, was sent on in the 64th minute.

Al Arabi, beaten finalists in last season's Asian Club Championship, had silenced the home fans by taking 67th minute lead with a spectacular solo effort by left back

Ahmed Al Binali.

Collecting the ball on the halfway line, Al Binali ran through the middle of the Nasr defence and struck a 25-yard shot past keeper Mudhi Al Dosari.

In an earlier match, 10-man Saipa of Iran beat Turkmenistan's Kopetdag 1-0. Jamshid Mohamadi headed the winner in the 30th minute. Saipa had Mohammad Salkjbari sent off in the 46th minute for a second bookable offence.

The top two teams from the round-robin league qualify for the semifinals with the top two from East Asian quarter-final league, which is being hosted in Bandung, west Java from November 26-30.

The East Asian quarter-finalists are holders Thai Farmers Bank, Verdy Kawasaki of Japan, South Korea's Ilhwa Chunma and Indonesia side Persib.

Premier League's 1st leg concludes

Ramtha keep lead

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The top three places in the Kingdom's Premier League soccer championship were captured by teams from the governorate of Irbid as the first leg of the competition was concluded Saturday.

Al Ramtha held on to the lead with 24 points atop the 12-team standings, while Al Hussein's 2-0 win over Al Jalil kept them in second place with 22 points followed by Kufroum (2-0 winners over Al Jazireh earlier in the week) in third place with 20 points.

Al Faisali moved from sixth to fourth after an important 3-0 win over Al Ahli Friday while Al Wihdat remained fifth after managing a 2-1 win over Al Baqaa.

The most disappointed team was probably Al Qadissieh who dropped from third to sixth after their 1-0 loss to Al Ramtha. Al Ahli too failed to give their fans a positive sign and remained in eighth place.

While the last four places were unchanged, Sahab's 2-0 win over Al Russeifa on the final day may prove to be very crucial as they raised their points from seven to 10 and a few wins in the second leg could move them up in the standings.

Last-placed Al Russeifa, playing in the Premier League after being promoted last year, remained the only winless team of the competition and have no points in the overall standings after losing all their matches. They also have the worst scoring record at 8-45.

The top three teams, Ramtha, Hussein and Kufroum, have one defeat each. Al Hussein, the top scoring team, also have the best scoring record at 23-7.

The Jordan Soccer Federation announced that the second leg of the competition would begin Thursday Dec. 7.

STANDINGS AFTER 1ST LEG

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Ramtha	11	7	3	1	16	4	24
Hussein	11	6	4	1	23	7	22
Kufroum	11	5	5	1	14	7	20
Faisali	11	5	4	2	15	7	19
Wihdat	11	5	4	2	17	10	19
Qadissieh	11	5	3	3	15	11	18
Jazireh	11	4	3	4	17	16	15
Ahli	11	3	5	3	15	10	14
Baqaa	11	3	3	5	18	19	12
Sahab	11	1	7	3	9	14	10
Jalil	11	1	1	9	9	26	4
Russeifa	11	—	—	11	8	45	—

Martinez puts Spain ahead despite Rubin's fight

VALENCIA (IR) — Conchita Martinez gave Spain the early initiative in the Fed Cup final against the United States on Saturday by beating Chanda Rubin in straight sets.

Rubin, replacing Monica Seles after the American world Number One pulled out earlier this week to recover from injuries, battled hard but was beaten 7-5, 7-6.

Rubin, 19, who reached the French Open quarter-finals this year, came back from 5-3 down in the second set to force a tie break which the Spaniard won 7-3.

Clearly nervous in the opening games, Rubin served a number of double faults but she gained confidence and often outran her heavier opponent.

4 Nations' Cup plagued by troubles

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — The Egyptian national soccer team were forced to leave their hotel in the North-West province town of Mmabatho late Friday and play South Africa because officials feared fans would riot if the match was postponed.

Originally scheduled to kick off against the South Africans at 8.30 pm (1830 GMT), the Samba Four Nations' Cup match was delayed almost three hours due to a series of power failures during the curtain-raiser between Zimbabwe and Zambia.

And to add to the misery of the north Africans, a severely depleted South African team triumphed 3-0 through early first half goals from Helman Mkhalele and Shaun Bartlett in a match that finished well after midnight local time.

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CINEMA TEL: 699238
PLAZA
Nadia Al Jundi, Farouq Fishawi and Mahmoud Hamideh in
A Woman Who shook the Throne of Egypt
(Arabic)
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL: 677430
CONCORD
CONCORD "1"
Nadia Al Jundi, Farouq Fishawi and Mahmoud Hamideh ...In
A Woman Who shook the Throne of Egypt
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30
CONCORD "2"
Sylvester Stallone...in
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Shows: 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:15

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Egypt on offensive against extremists

CAIRO (AFP) — A week after a suicide bombing killed 17 at its embassy in Pakistan, Egypt has gone on the offensive to bring to justice militants living in political asylum abroad.

Faced with an apparent shift in extremists' strategy from attacks in Egypt to operations against its interests abroad, Cairo has also changed its approach against the militants it once derided as a mere "band of outlaws."

Since Sunday's Islamabad bombing, Egypt has called attention to threats against its diplomats abroad and has openly criticised nations it accuses of being "nests of terrorists."

"Terrorist bands use their residence in certain European and Arab countries" to plan attacks, Interior Minister Hassan Al Ali told the government weekly Akhbar Al Yom on Saturday.

He called on those nations to stop granting "political asylum so that terrorist elements cannot exploit them to escape justice and continue to plan more crimes."

The government is smarting from a wave of attacks and threats. On Friday the foreign ministry said it had received bomb threats at its embassy in Sanaa and pushed Yemeni authorities to take "necessary precautions."

But Yemen denied the assertion. "Stories carried by certain news agencies describing threats against the Egyptian embassy are groundless," a Yemeni Foreign Ministry spokesman, cited by the official agency SABA, said.

On Friday the official Egyptian news agency MENA, quoting a Foreign Ministry official, said "an old bearded man" drove up to the embassy building in Sanaa in a Land Rover-type vehicle late Thursday and made two bomb threats.

An official at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry confirmed the incident but could not provide any further details.

The man was accompanied by a woman who had already been seen circling around the embassy, MENA said.

A guard and a Yemeni police officer posted to front of the building reported the incident to authorities.

Egypt has accused Yemen of harbouring Egyptian militants threatening to overthrow the secular government in Cairo.

An Egypt Air passenger plane flying between Islamabad and Cairo was forced to make an emergency landing Friday in Dubai after receiving what turned out to be a false bomb threat, a crew member said.

On Saturday, the militant International Justice Group (IJG) praised a shooting attack on Egypt's embassy in Bulgaria earlier in the week, which it said was committed by "sympathisers."

The IJG called on its supporters to target Egyptian interests in countries "conspiring against the Islamic movement, such as Pakistan, Thailand and other known targets." It gave no further explanation for targeting those countries.

The group, which claimed both the Pakistan bombing and the murder on November 13 of an Egyptian diplomat in Geneva, has vowed to continue its own campaign against Egyptians abroad.

The Gamaa Islamiah and Al Jihad, which have led militant violence in Egypt, also claimed the blast, which killed 17 and injured over 60.

Gen. Alfi, in his comments to Akbar Al Yom, called for an international conference of the world's security officials "under the aegis of the United Nations to establish coordination and put forward effective measures against terrorism."

Earlier, Gen. Alfi condemned Pakistan for failing to clamp down on hundreds of militants on its soil.

"To allow these criminals to carry out terrorist attacks and allow them freedom of action constitutes a weak point for any state," he told the Arabic newspaper Al Hayat.

"The least that a state where terrorist incidents have taken place can do" is make rapid extraditions, he said.

On Thursday his ministry also pointed a finger at Britain, saying London had given political asylum to "one of the masterminds behind Jihad" and charged that another was living there. It said a third leader was living in Austria.

Egypt's ambassador to Pakistan, Nuaman Galal, said after Sunday's blast that his country had asked for increased security at its embassies in 15 countries after information warning of possible attacks.

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Earlier, Gen. Alfi condemned Pakistan for failing to clamp down on hundreds of militants on its soil.

"To allow these criminals to carry out terrorist attacks and allow them freedom of action constitutes a weak point for any state," he told the Arabic newspaper Al Hayat.

"The least that a state where terrorist incidents have taken place can do" is make rapid extraditions, he said.

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On Friday the official Egyptian news agency MENA, quoting a Foreign Ministry official, said "an old bearded man" drove up to the embassy building in Sanaa in a Land Rover-type vehicle late Thursday and made two bomb threats.

An official at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry confirmed the incident but could not provide any further details.

The man was accompanied by a woman who had already been seen circling around the embassy, MENA said.

A guard and a Yemeni police officer posted to front of the building reported the incident to authorities.

Egypt has accused Yemen of harbouring Egyptian militants threatening to overthrow the secular government in Cairo.

An Egypt Air passenger plane flying between Islamabad and Cairo was forced to make an emergency landing Friday in Dubai after receiving what turned out to be a false bomb threat, a crew member said.

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EXECUTED: Four former members of the police force in Shenzhen, China, experts in martial arts, await execution on Friday after an open trial before a crowd of 35,000 in Dongguan city. The accused were executed for the kidnapping and murder of a Hong Kong businessman and his secretary in June this year (AFP photo)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Rafsanjani favours continuing talks with UAE

TEHRAN (AFP) — Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani has said he favoured pursuing talks with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) over three strategic Gulf islands disputed by both countries. Negotiations over the islands of Abu Musa, Greater Tunb and Lesser Tunb "have to continue for the sake of Islam and the region," he told state television late Friday. The president indirectly blamed the UAE for the failure of the talks between experts from both countries in Qatar this week to try to set an agenda for further negotiations. "It was not our fault," he said. The four-day talks, which ended Wednesday, were the first between the two countries since September 1992 when a session in Abu Dhabi broke down without agreement. Negotiations are deadlocked with the two countries wide apart in their positions on the islands, which control the vital Hormuz Strait in the northern Gulf.

Israel calls for organ transplant network

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel, which is chronically short of transplant donors, is calling for an Eastern Mediterranean medical service to fly organs around the region, Health Minister Ephraim Sneh said Saturday. Israel will propose the creation of a regional transplant network at a landmark conference of 27 European and Mediterranean countries in Barcelona which begins on Monday, Mr. Sneh told Israeli radio. He said the network, modelled on a scheme operating in the European Union, should include Israel, Turkey, Cyprus, Greece, Egypt and Jordan. "The essential thing is that organs can be transported by air in two to two and a half hours for urgent operations," he said. Israel has almost 1,000 patients who have had to wait months for a transplant and there is a particular shortage of liver donors, the radio said.

Sudan using chemical weapons — opposition

CAIRO (AFP) — The Sudanese government has used chemical weapons against towns in southern Sudan, the opposition Umma Party said here on Saturday. "Planes staffed by Iraqi pilots armed with chemical bombs bombed on Monday areas around the Namang mountains and outside Kadugli town," 600 kilometres south of Khartoum, the Umma Party said. It said, in a statement received by AFP, that the planes had earlier bombed the nearby areas of Heiban and Tilish on September 19. "Eyewitnesses said deaths and injuries occurred among residents and that there was a big change in colour of the corpses, and of animals and trees" from the chemicals, the statement said. Government militias "buried the dead in mass graves to hide the traces of this horrible crime," it said. The Umma Party has previously accused Iraq of selling arms to Khartoum to help fight the civil war against southern rebels.

Ekeus arrives in Saudi Arabia

RIYADH (AFP) — Rolf Ekeus, head of the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) on disarmament of Iraq, arrived here on Saturday on the sixth and final leg of a tour of the Gulf to solicit financial help, officials said. Mr. Ekeus, who has already visited Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates in a tour aimed at raising \$30 million a year to continue his committee's work, travels to Iraq for a three-day mission on Monday. He was due to meet Prince Saudi Al Faisal, the Saudi foreign minister, before going on to his rear based in Bahrain on Sunday to prepare for his latest mission to Iraq.

Demirel denies tension with Saudis

DOHA (AFP) — Turkish President Suleiman Demirel denied that the execution by Saudi Arabia of Turkish drug smugglers has caused a crisis between the two countries, the Qatari newspaper Al Watan reported Saturday. He described the relationship with Riyadh as "historic and strong." Four Turks have been beheaded in the past few months for smuggling drugs into Saudi Arabia, and around 70 others are jailed for the same reason. 20 of whom have been sentenced to death, according to the Turkish government. Saudi Interior Minister Prince Nayef Ben Abdul Aziz said on Nov. 6 his country was determined to execute drug smugglers despite criticism by human rights organisations. A record number of 191 people have been executed in Saudi Arabia so far this year, most of them foreigners convicted of drug smuggling.

Papandreou stable after respirator removal

ATHENS (R) — Doctors treating Greek Premier Andreas Papandreou for pneumonia said on Saturday his condition was stable one day after being taken off a respirator. Hospital spokesman Gregory Skalkas said the 76-year-old premier was slowly adapting to breathing on his own after three days on a respirator during treatment for an infection of his left lung. "The first 24 hours after the removal of the respirator are critical," Mr. Skalkas told reporters. The respirator's removal on Friday was the first good news since Mr. Papandreou was rushed to a hospital intensive care unit on Monday and diagnosed as having pneumonia. "There has been a significant improvement in the premier's condition," Mr. Skalkas said on Friday. Mr. Papandreou was put on the respirator on Tuesday. Doctors have said it was important to take him off the machine so that his lungs could begin to function fully on their own and to avoid secondary infections.

Demirel calls for Iraq-Kurd talks

DOHA (Agencies) — Turkish President Suleiman Demirel called for talks between the Iraqi government and the Kurdish opposition, in an interview published here Saturday.

Mr. Demirel told the Qatari newspaper Al Watan that Turkey "is in favour" of a dialogue between the government of Baghdad and local (Kurdish) leaders to bring about a settlement within the framework of the Iraqi constitution.

He said Kurdish-held regions of northern Iraq were "an inseparable part of the Iraqi territory" and that Ankara "rejects the establishment in this region of an independent entity."

Mr. Demirel added that there was an "understanding" with Iran "to bring back normal life to northern Iraq," without giving details.

The two main Iraqi Kurdish factions, the Kurdistan Democratic Party and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, have been locked since 1994 in an armed conflict for control of northern Iraq that has left more than 2,000 people dead.

Baghdad has repeatedly invited the Kurds to talks in an attempt to end the feud and also to expand its authority again into the regions the Kurds seized after the Iraqi defeat in the January-February 1991 Gulf war.

Turkey has been worried by the situation in northern Iraq because the absence of the Iraqi authorities has allowed Turkish separatists of the Kurdish Labour Party

(PKK) to set up bases in the region.

The Turkish army launched several offensive this year to destroy bases of the PKK, which is fighting to set up an independent Kurdish homeland in southeast Turkey.

Mr. Demirel also said that his country has lost more than \$20 billion because of the U.N. trade and oil embargo imposed on Iraq since its August 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Part of the oil exported by Iraq before the sanctions passed through the pipeline linking its field in Kirkuk to the Turkish Mediterranean terminal of Yumurtalik.

Iraq meanwhile condemned United Nations arms envoy Rolf Ekeus Saturday and dismissed his recent remarks on Baghdad weapons of mass destruction as unfair.

"Ambassador Rolf Ekeus gave a series of exciting statements which were biased and unobjective," the official Al Iraq newspaper said in a commentary.

The paper's remarks were made two days before a scheduled visit to Baghdad by Mr. Ekeus, who heads the U.N. Special Commission (UNSCOM) overseeing the dismantling of Iraq's

Al Iraq blasted a recent visit by the envoy to Gulf states, seeking financial and political support for the committee set up to ensure Iraq's compliance with part of the ceasefire terms after its defeat in the Gulf war over

(Continued on page 7)

Inter-clan war erupts in southern Somalia

MOGADISHU (AFP) — At least four people have died and seven others wounded in two days of fighting between rival clan militias in Somalia's southern port of Kismayo, unconfirmed reports reaching here said Saturday.

The reports, published in the Saturday issue of Mogadishu's Ayaamaha newspaper, said the fighting was between militia loyal to local strongman General Mohammad Said Hirs Morgan and those of factional leader Gen. Mohammad Farah Aidede's deputy, Colonel Mohammad Haji Aden.

The reports indicated that the fighting began when militia loyal to Gen. Morgan, a former supporter of Gen. Aidede who recently defected to the United Somali Congress (USC/SNA) faction of Gen. Aidede's former financier-turned bitter political rival, Osman Hassan Ali Ato, attacked Col. Aden's headquarters.

The attack was started when Col. Aden allegedly tried to intervene and stop foreign fishermen from fishing in the Lower Juba waters under an agreement brokered between Gen. Morgan, known as the "strongman of Kismayo," and several fishing companies, notably, the Morris Company and a Russian fishing group.

David Morris, the owner of the company, established his huge fishing venture in Kismayo in an effort to continue business in war-torn Somalia after the international community pulled out last March, but was killed in April in an

ambush at Kudha village, 120 kilometres to the southwest.

His body has never been recovered, but the death was attributed to a misunderstanding between Somali sub-clans in the region.

Addressing the public at a mosque after Friday's prayers, Gen. Morgan urged the people of Kismayo to fight what he called "pagans and their supporters," a term he normally uses to refer to Gen. Aidede and his supporters.

Ahmad Bidde, spokesman for the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM), which supports Gen. Morgan here in Mogadishu, confirmed the reports of fighting, but disputed the casualty figures, saying that only one police officer serving the Islamic Sharia court in Kismayo had been wounded in the clashes.

Mr. Bidde said the incident was a minor one triggered by Col. Aden's attempts to interrupt the local administration of the region, but declined to comment on the alleged fishing agreement between Gen. Morgan and the foreign fishing companies.

Mr. Bidde said clan elders in Mogadishu had settled the dispute and security restored.

COLUMN

Sax duet mooted between Clinton and 'Van the Man'

BELFAST (AFP) — Bill Clinton and one of Belfast's favourite sons, singer and musician Van Morrison, may play a saxophone duet when the U.S. president visits Northern Ireland next week, if the organisers have their way. The celebrity jam session could take place next Thursday after Mr. Clinton's scheduled appointment to turn on the illuminations on a giant Christmas tree outside Belfast City Hall. Thousands of people will wait for the Morrison concert which follows. "Like the president, Van also likes to play the saxophone, so who knows what might happen?" said one Northern Ireland official charged with bringing the two men together. But it was unclear whether the president intends to pack his sax for the trip, which will also include visits to Londonderry, London and Dublin to kick-start the ailing Northern Ireland peace process.

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Mrs. Yeltsin to make first official trip abroad

MOSCOW (R) — President Boris Yeltsin's wife will make her first independent trip abroad Sunday when she flies to Paris to take part in an international forum on children. Naina Yeltsin will fly on a scheduled Aeroflot flight to the forum, being held under United Nations auspices, the presidential press service told ITAR-TASS news agency. The forum will be attended by the wives of more than 30 heads of state. It is the first time she has travelled abroad in her own right, TASS said.

Normally publicity-shy, Mrs. Yeltsin has been under the spotlight over the past month since her husband was taken to hospital with heart problems for the second time this year. She has reassured the public that the president, who now appears regularly on television holding meetings in the Central Clinical Hospital, was feeling better and had a firm grip on the reins of power.